Soldiers and Sailors Historical Society of Rhode Island.

PERSONAL NARRATIVES

OF EVENTS IN THE

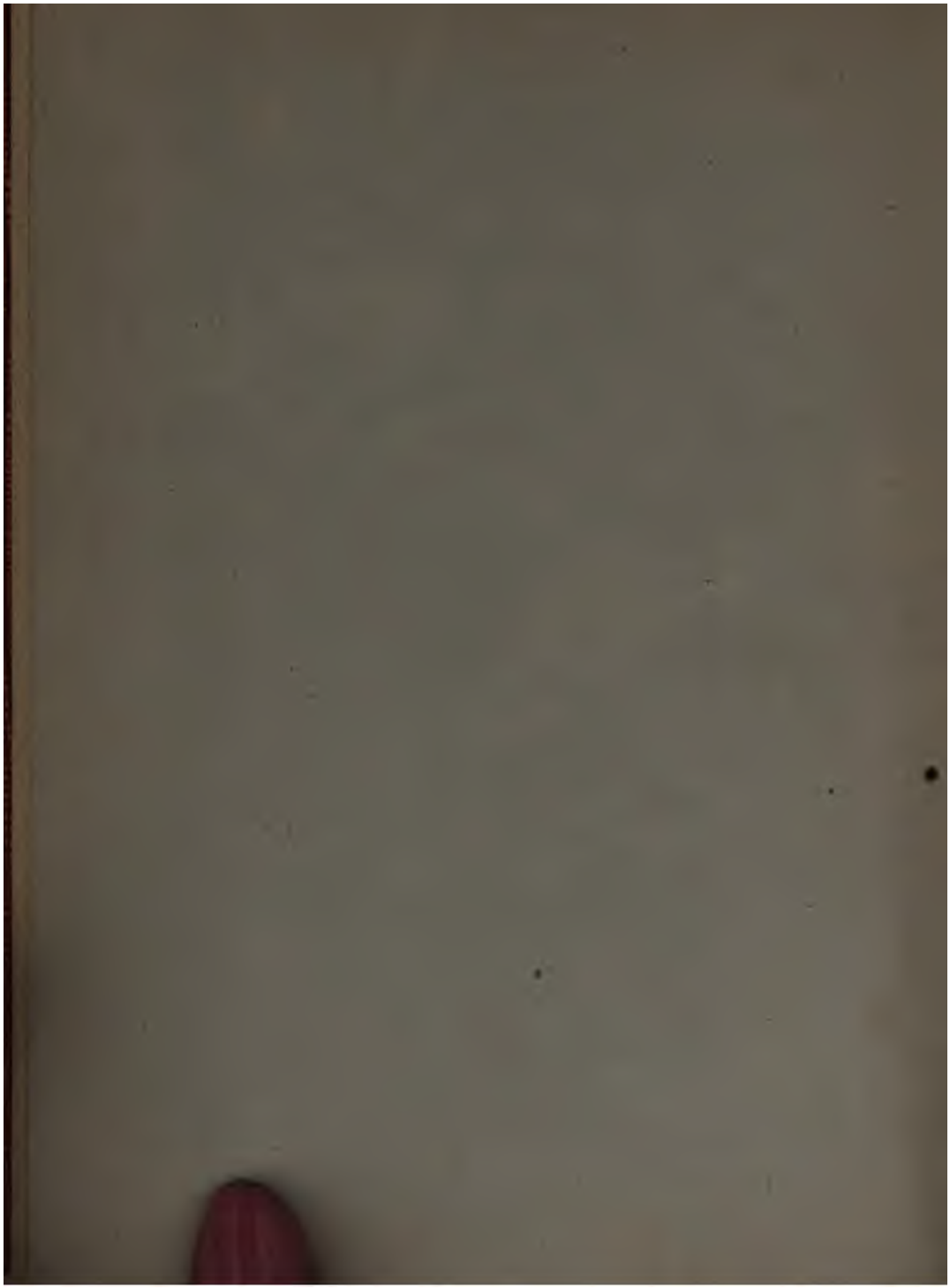
WAR OF THE REBELLION.

No. 8. Second Series.

A RECRUIT BEFORE PETERSBURG.

BY

From GEORGE B. PECK, Jr.



Geo. B. Peck Jr., 2nd Regt. R.S.V..

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RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

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GEORGE B. PECK, JR.,

[LATE LIEUTENANT SECOND RHODE ISLAND INFANTRY.]

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A RECRUIT BEFORE PETERSBURG.*

[READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, JAN. 14, 1880.]

ON December 14th, 1864, I was mustered into the national service as a second lieutenant of the Second Regiment, Rhode Island Volunteers, upon condition that I raise a company (G) toward refilling said regiment; was placed on waiting orders January 3, 1865; was sent to the draft rendezvous, more popularly known as the Conscript Camp, at Grapevine Point, then in Fairhaven, now in New Haven, Connecticut, on the fourteenth of the same month; and was shipped with my command on March thirteenth, by the screw transport Euterpe, to City Point, Virginia. Anchor was cast on the evening of the sixteenth in James River, some twenty miles below our destination, and here was received the first intimation that I had ap-

* I have endeavored to portray a soldier's life as he lived it. That is sufficient explanation of certain statements and expressions. G. B. P., JR.

proached a dangerous neighborhood. I had retired to my stateroom and just fallen asleep when my first lieutenant (William Vincent Carr, of Providence), entered and asked.

"Is your revolver loaded?"

"Yes sir!" was the response, given as promptly as though I had lain awake for hours.

"Is it in convenient reach?"

"Yes!"

"Where?"

"In its holster, hanging with belt and sword on yonder hook."

"Had you not better have it under your pillow?"

"I can reach it in ten seconds."

"I think you had best place it under your head," he continued, at the same time handing me the weapon.

"Very well! What's the matter?"

"Oh, nothing; only I thought you should have it ready for instant use;" whereupon he left and in three minutes I was sound asleep. Next morning, seventeenth, I asked.

"What was the trouble last night."

"The commander of the Euterpe stated night attacks are frequently made by guerillas and confederate pickets upon vessels lying midstream; we therefore set double guards and made every preparation to receive callers."

"Why did you not tell me this last night?"

"I did not wish unnecessarily to alarm you!"

"Thank you!" was the simple response gratefully returned for such thoughtful consideration.

We anchored off City Point about ten o'clock; a tug conveyed us to the shore. So much time was occupied by the formalities attendant upon the transfer of the large squad of general recruits to the provost marshal's department, that we were detained until the six o'clock train. This was composed neither of hotel nor palace cars. But a single passenger car could be found. Two freight cars accommodated our company, the men sitting on their knapsacks, the officers on their valises. For the first few miles we speed along right merrily, but soon sensations most unique are experienced. The cars are not rocking unusually, but—can it be possible? they certainly are plunging! Yes! despite most persistent effort it is

impossible to maintain verticality. We are testing that novelty of modern warfare, Grant's military railway. Peculiar in its origin and purpose, it was no less singular in construction. Unprecedented conditions presented themselves as essential elements in its engineering problems, and their fulfillment indicates the power of military necessity. Its vales were so deep that had trains stopped therein, they had been hopelessly imprisoned; its hills so frequent we seemed to bound from crest to crest as on the restless billows; its trestlework so light a McClellan might well hesitate to trust himself with a hand-car thereon; and yet the fragile structure was the aorta of the army. Therewith was borne to every portion unfailing supplies of life and strength. And this within easy cannon range of the enemy's picket!

Dark night had settled upon us when we reached —somewhere! Our cars had been uncoupled, and we were alone in the gloom—most emphatically "strangers in a strange land." After brief consultation, Lieutenant Carr, with a sergeant as escort, started forth in search of information. Stumbling by chance into some general's quarters, he secured an

orderly for guide and straightly returned. (He departed crookedly, "not knowing whither he went.") Column was formed in four ranks, doubled files, and the order given, "MARCH!" The sacred soil had been thoroughly baked, and every wheel track and hoof print of the entire winter was preserved as by cast-iron. Moreover, surface drains, natural and artificial, abounded. Over all and through all these we staggered, with scarce a star to cheer us, not even a match flicker to illume our way. After a half hours groping (it seemed thrice as long), we discovered a slight ascent just ahead, and simultaneously heard the sharp challenge, "HALT! who goes there?" "Company G, Second Rhode Island," was the answer. The word passed like wildfire along the regimental guard, its sergeant relieved our guide, and lo! the entire regiment had rushed from its quarters and with enthusiastic shouts welcomed us to its midst. We passed through the broad street in front of the officers' huts, to regimental headquarters, where our captain, (Charles W. Gleason) was introduced, the men billetted upon their antecedent comrades for present entertainment, and the two lieutenants in-

vited by the commander, (Lieutenant Colonel Elisha H. Rhodes) to tea. That supper-table was most curiously scanned! I had heard much concerning the privations endured by our brave soldiers before Petersburg, and was naturally somewhat anxious; but when I viewed the savory ham, the light, white bread, the sweet butter and rich cheese, the delicious sweet-cake and fragrant coffee, all served with neat white ware, my spirits rose and I felt that possibly I might survive, even though as a subaltern I could not fare quite so sumptuously every day.

After our frugal repast was concluded, the officers were invited to headquarters and introduced. A very pleasant social evening followed. At its close, we were shown to a snug little "tent" near the center of the officers' street, our quarters for the night. This was so perfect a gem, I became desperately enamored at sight; indeed, when Captain Gleason announced some days later that our new, spacious and elegant stockade was ready for occupation, I convinced him it was not worth the trouble to move until we should discover what the disturbances then rife would amount to. Hence, the palace was occu-

pied, never! But to return to my little "shebang"; it was a miniature log cabin, save that in place of a shingle roof there was a triple thickness of tenting. The side walls were less than five feet in height; the ridge pole a trifle over six feet from the ground; the width of the hut about seven feet, and the length, say fifteen feet. The floor was of the "sacred soil" beaten so hard as to resemble cement; the chimney occupied one entire end, save the doorway, and was constructed of double length kindling wood. Mud served well for plaster whenever required. At the opposite end was the bedstead; four forked stakes driven into the ground formed the support; straight ones about two and one-half inches in diameter, connected the two on either side; these in turn were joined by an indefinite number of straight twigs an inch in diameter lying lengthwise, and resting so closely separation and bulging were impossible; upon these was scattered a tolerable quantity of old hay; next came sundry rubber blankets, and above all a liberal supply of woolen ones. I have found more uncomfortable resting places in many a pretentious residence. On one side the room was a small

stationary table, made of boards that once encased "hard tack;" upon it rested a cheap tin candlestick, and above was a single shelf; a solitary stool of rough boards stood in front; on the opposite side was, space just sufficient for two army valises; lengthwise and above, in the topmost log, was a row of nails for hats, caps, overcoats, sword-belts, etc. The door, swinging on leathern hinges, was of the same material as the table, was closed with a wooden latch, and was secured by a thong. Such was my home before Petersburg. I ne'er shall find its equal for pleasure and repose.

Next morning, Saturday, eighteenth, I naturally looked around to discover what manner of place I was in, and first I went to view the rifle trench. This consisted, at that particular point, simply of a low parapet—say four and one half feet in length—without banquette, but revetted with turf and fascines. The superior and exterior slopes were not accurately graded, yet the latter was sufficiently steep to afford decided vantage should it be necessary to spring to the top and use the bayonet in repelling an attack. The ditch was simply an irregular

depression whence earth had been taken as convenient to build the work. Looking forth directly to the front—northwest just there—a plain stretched away unencumbered by trees or shrubs. Distant about two hundred yards could be distinguished, with difficulty, our picket line, protecting not only ourselves but a double row of abattis just this side. On the right, three-eighths of a mile away, was Battery Twenty-six; on the left about equidistant, Fort Wadsworth. Facing to the rear we observe first an avenue one-hundred and fifty feet wide, following the line of earthworks, and furnishing an unobstructed passage-way for troops; next a village of six streets, to which was subsequently added a seventh, at right angles to the avenue. Upon these, front huts of diverse form and size, whose inmates were determined originally by similarity of tastes. Beyond is a street twenty-five feet wide, occupied on the farther side by the row of officers' huts. Midway in this line is quite an interval revealing, still farther to the rear, a low palisade with narrow gateway. Immediately within and parallel to the fence, is a deep but narrow draining ditch, crossed by

a light bridge. Next is a carefully prepared bed, ellipsoidal in shape and intended possibly for flowers when spring shall be sufficiently advanced. Around this are grouped the quarters of the field and staff. At the foci are two stakes to which are fastened by day the state and national colors. Between these a path runs direct from the gate to the opposite side of the plot, terminating before the door of a hut, which is official headquarters. Here all routine business is transacted, and until our arrival it was simply an office. Now the acting major, Captain James A. Bowen, makes it his home. It is flanked by two tents, the one for horse equipments, the other for general stores. At the southwest extremity of the ellipse, is an elegant and spacious hut with boarded floor and paneled door, erected by the regiment during the colonel's absence in the early Spring, and occupied by himself and surgeon, (William F. Smith, a subject of Great Britain.) Opposite is an ordinary hut, the domain of Acting Adjutant Frank S. Halliday and Quartermaster Robert W. Small.

To the right and to the rear of the camp, is quite an abrupt descent. Near its base is an inexhausti-

ble spring of peerless water. Beyond the valley is the railroad, and higher knolls more remote. Camps are thickly strewn on the right and the left. On my extreme right a signal tower rises conspicuously more than a hundred and fifty feet. The grass has hardly started; all trees have been leveled and consumed; yet the picture seems but that of a grand military picnic. Not a sound breaks the peaceful quiet save the twitter of the vernal birds, the whistle of the locomotives, and—what! how shall I describe that sound? Surely there are no ducks nor geese around; there is no running water; nor yet any live turkeys. But what can that be? I hear it again. It will not do to ask. I wait patiently several days, when by chance strolling near the stable, that now familiar sound again salutes my ears. I turn quickly and discover a long-eared, light-heeled, narrow-tailed songster of the field energetically rehearsing for the next concert.

No cannonading was heard until evening and then it was quite distant—say two miles, or the region of Fort Hell (Sedgwick). The sound seemed a cross between that produced by a battery of light artillery

practicing with blank cartridges, half a mile removed, and distant thunder.

Sunday morning, nineteenth, heard some brisk picket firing, also in the distance, not unlike a party out gunning, as of course it really was. On our own front this rarely occurred; the boys had a tacit understanding not to annoy one another. In the forenoon I visited a neighboring chapel and listened to an excellent discourse on "Christ the Head of the Church." The congregation was composed of enlisted men, with but a moderate sprinkling of shoulder straps. At the close of the service ten men publicly professed their attachment to the Redeemer, in the manner customary to pedobaptist denominations. It is true that some of the delegates of the Christian Commission, through errors of judgment, occasionally preached and prayed when they should have been ministering to the physical necessities of those around them, thereby casting a certain discredit upon the cause to which they were truly devoted. Yet by the greater value of the soul over the body is to be estimated the greater importance of their work to any other.

On Monday, twentieth, as officer of the day I had charge of camp. In the afternoon the regiment marched off to participate in a grand review of the corps by Admiral Porter. When it returned every one was so begrimed it was impossible to recognize even old friends. The effect of dust is wonderful; so long as a person remains in the crowd and takes his share, he maintains his relationship; let him be away, and every one becomes a stranger.

In the evening Colonel Rhodes, having been duly empowered when at home, opened a lodge of the Union League, and conferred membership upon Lieutenants Dorrance (John Kinnicut,) Carr and myself. However solemn the rites may have been in spacious halls, adorned with costly paraphernalia, they could not have been half so impressive as when performed almost within range of hostile guns; the banners, battle-flags to be defended even at the cost of life; the swords, blades that on more than one occasion had drank deep of an enemy's blood. The obligations were thus possessed of a reality found nowhere else.

About half-past eleven o'clock the brigade sutler,

some distance removed, having excited the ire of the boys by alleged unjust transactions, received a visitation. The tent pins were quietly drawn and suddenly he found the canvass dropped on his head completely enveloping him. After considerable exertion he tunnelled his way out and fired three shots from his revolver at retreating shadows. No one was hurt — neither did the spirits retire bootless. As this took place beyond my precinct, I could not interfere.

Tuesday, twenty-first, afternoon and evening was characterized by a very severe rainstorm, yet the canvas roof protected the interior of the "tent" so perfectly that we slept as sound and dry as if in marble halls.

Wednesday, twenty-second, I was sent in charge of the fatigue detail to Fort Fisher, two and a quarter miles distant as the crow flies, towards the left, and the most salient work in that section. It was nearly completed save the bomb proofs. My squad, thanks to its diminutiveness, was set to turnpiking, the easiest duty in that neighborhood. Its nature may be inferred by those who have witnessed the repair

of country roads. Should a person be overmuch afflicted with military romancing it can most speedily be cured by assigning some such task for a few days. It is far more prosaic than marching.

Thursday, twenty-third, was a memorable day. A heavy gale prevailed for many hours, unroofing huts and levelling tents. The sacred clay, as already intimated, had been thoroughly baked, but constant attrition of countless feet had reduced protuberances to finest dust. This was borne aloft by the wind, and for hours it was impossible to see twenty-five feet, frequently not six feet ahead. As I sat in my "shebang" with door tightly closed, so readily did the dust penetrate my practically waterproof roofing, that in five minutes after brushing my coat it looked as if its wearer had just been extricated from a meal bin. I speedily learned not to be over fastidious in dress.

Two points of vital interest may well be alluded to here; my subsistence and my society. Of course it could not be expected that a subaltern should fare as sumptuously as he who sported a double row of buttons, nor his viands be served as elegantly; yet the

necessity of eating rested equally on both. Our mess, unusually large, was composed of two captains, and four or five lieutenants. Immediately upon taking the field it was broken up, Captain Gleason, Lieutenant Carr and myself, remaining together. Regimental sutlers had been ordered to City Point before my arrival, hence we depended chiefly on government supplies. We had hot short-cake and cold meat for supper; cold short-cake, "soft bread" (baker's bread) and either cold or warm meat, for breakfast; hot meat and excellent potatoes, with bread, for dinner. Onions, that best of antiscorbutics, were abundant, and I had them on the table generally twice a day. Our coffee was the very best, though I preferred Adam's ale; frequently toast was served; this last was generally prepared from "hard tack" a cracker resembling the ordinary pilot bread, so justly esteemed for chowders, save that its shape was square. The condensed milk at hand was quite sweet and of scarcely less consistence than the cream of cream-cakes. An excellent substitute for these was extemporized by dipping three spoonsful of the milk upon a slice of soft bread. The meat was

served variously; in the form of a pie, a stew, a soup, a fry or a broil. It was invariably porcine or bovine. Two or three days after the Fort Steadman difficulty our supply of fresh meat gave out, and subsequently we lived chiefly on ham. Soft bread disappeared about the same time. Our table and kitchen ware was exclusively of tin and steel.

Concerning social privileges it may be remarked that in camp as elsewhere, "birds of a feather flock together," and one's natural temperament will speedily attract congenial spirits. Moreover, two hidden chains bind closely those elsewise perfect strangers; the ecclesiastic and the mystic tie—a common faith and a common brotherhood. Their strength and durability is as their respective origins; the former drew me to my regimental commander then, the second has since thrown its influence around me also. The paternal consideration he manifested towards his junior officer, the wise counsel and gentle encouragement given, secured at once my highest regard, my profoundest gratitude, and the intervening decade and a half has but strengthened these sentiments. My captain was a man of superior

natural ability, of unflinching, yet unpretentious courage, of unquestioned honor and integrity; courteous, even gentle to his men, yet a strict disciplinarian. In all the line there was none so qualified to rank his associates. He was one of nature's noblemen, and I could but weep bitterly, when, as I lay upon the ground at the field hospital at Sailor's Creek, news of his untimely fate was imparted me. My senior lieutenant had secured my regard by weeks of intimate association at the draft rendezvous; what need had I of other friends? And yet my associates of the line were all that could be desired. The regiment was practically, if not absolutely, temperate. The colonel said he would not have a drunken officer in his command, and he did not. All knew what conduct is "becoming an officer and a gentleman," and nearly every one conformed himself strictly thereto. While I am willing frankly to admit that I could not have seen camp life more favorably circumstanced, I wish most emphatically to declare that there is nothing of itself demoralizing or debasing in a soldier's career. War simply develops character; it makes a good man better and a

bad man worse. The same influences produce antagonistic effects. Fifteen years of careful observation in the ranks, line, field and staff of the naval, military and militia services, have but intensified my convictions.

On Friday, twenty-fourth, was notified I should have charge of the picket detail on the morrow.

On Saturday, twenty-fifth, was up and dressed at half-past five. Had heard firing on the Ninth Corps front every night since the eighteenth, but it seemed unusually lively now. Both cannonading and musketry were rapidly increasing, until it became evident somebody was making a serious disturbance in that section; still everything moved on in camp as usual. About seven, the picket detail fell in and I marched therewith to brigade headquarters. In a few moments the several details were ordered back to their respective commands. Upon reaching camp I found the regiment drawn up in line of battle. With accustomed foresight, Colonel Rhodes had directed the men to prepare for marching and fighting with one day's rations in their haversacks, so when orders came for him to move at once to the scene of

discord, he had only to wait the return of my squad. Its members fell in promptly with their comrades and the Second Rhode Island was the first to march. I was ordered to report to my captain.

It does produce on the reflective mind peculiar sensations, thus to witness the departure for the field of strife of a body of men, all acquaintances and many warm personal friends, while the crash of resounding arms fills the ear. Some shall never again be met on earth; others will be dismembered; many more seamed or scarred by steel, lead or iron: all will endure danger, privation and suffering; and everything so imminent.

Special orders directed one company of each regiment should be left to guard the line. Company G was detailed for this purpose, more particularly, perhaps, because hitherto it had not received muskets or cartridge boxes. My first duty then was to assist the captain in distributing these important equipments; also, a liberal allowance of cartridges. Unlike most, our cartridge boxes were worn just below the breast, and thus maintained by two straps passing straight over the shoulders and attached to the

waist-belt behind. The complicated nature of this arrangement was such as to secure from the boys the epithet of "mule harness." My second duty was to assist in instructing the men in the manual of arms. While thus engaged the left of a strong line of skirmishers appeared, which, taking intervals from the right, extended along the rifle trench from the battle ground, about half a mile to our left. About ten o'clock the firing ceased. It was quite hazy whence the sound proceeded, and had been from earliest morning. At eleven o'clock we were ordered to hold ourselves in readiness to march. The baggage wagons were packed and preparations made for striking the tents, some of which were indeed taken down. At noon the brigade returned to its headquarters, where it enjoyed a brief rest. About the same time I heard brisk cannonading on the left, in the direction of Fort Fisher. The brigade moved on, and the firing increased in intensity. I mounted the breastwork and scanned that horizon with eager eye. I could see the flash of the thirty-two pounders on Fort Fisher, and hear the whistle of their balls; also the rattle of musketry. The atmosphere became

densely fumid, especially when nearer forts opened. Even Battery Twenty-six, on our right, tossed over a few shells by way of additional gentle stimulus.

While viewing the prospect I turned to my superior and veteran officer with the remark, "Captain, do you know what a battle sounds like?" "No!" was the reply, "what does it resemble?" "Well," said I, "if you take a dozen bunches of powder crackers and tie to them while in cluster, at chance points, twenty or more cannon crackers, and then light the fuses at one end, I think you would have a pretty good representation of a battle, at least, so far as noise is concerned." "If you were there you would think of powder crackers," he exclaimed, in rather a sarcastic manner. "Oh," I replied, "of course it would sound louder and perhaps different if one were engaged;" and yet I am to-day unable to give a better recipe for producing the din of battle in a modest way.

At half past three o'clock the wagons moved off. A large New York regiment appeared and took its place before the camp; Company G was in line a little to its left. About five there was sharp firing on

our front, so the captain gave the order "Load with ball—LOAD!" It was rich to see the eagerness with which the young recruits inserted their bullets. It seemed as though some would climb the barrels and dive into the muzzles of their pieces, such was their joy at even the remote prospect of work. None came to disturb our quiet, however, so after a half hour's interval arms were stacked and the men dismissed. At six o'clock the firing ceased almost entirely. Meanwhile we had been ordered to hold ourselves in readiness to march at an instant's notice, and our baggage train had departed; yet at eight o'clock in the evening the wagons returned, so we felt sure we might expect the regiment sometime. It appeared about two in the morning, Sunday, twenty-sixth, decidedly fatigued, the officers having had nothing to eat since breakfast the day before. Of their experience I may not speak, for I did not participate.

At half-past seven the next morning I was sent with my detail to brigade headquarters for a second time, but was again ordered to camp. The Johnnies were so exasperated at the events of the last thirty-

six hours that it was not safe for groups of men to be seen around the picket line, though generally, as already indicated, there was no firing on our front. Soon after noon I strolled over to the chapel, but learned there would be no service until six o'clock, that the men might rest after the severe labors of the preceding day—a proper exemplification of the principle: "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath."

I was hardly settled again in camp when the adjutant informed me the picket must go out in a few minutes—so for a third time I visited headquarters, and this time successfully, for speedily we were marched, and most literally to the front! The Union line in that section resembled a horseshoe, taking Fort Davis as one heel calk and Fort Fisher the other, the curve being re-entering. The picket lines of both forces had conformed themselves measurably thereto, but about the time of the affair at Fort Fisher, more definitely when we heard the firing on our front, our picket line charged and gained ground sufficient to render the line comparatively straight. I was assigned a position to the right of the Halifax

road, extending across and beyond the Weldon railroad, which there was directly parallel and but a few yards removed, at a point where the enemy had constructed a rifle pit, as it turned, for our especial benefit. Occupying it in reverse we found the earth just high enough to fire over, and just thick enough to stand. At intervals of forty yards were groups of six men in charge of a corporal, forming outposts. Each of these sent forward some thirty yards two sentinels, who at intervals of sixty feet crouched behind stumps or small piles of earth with their rifles at a ready, and peered intently into the darkness for an hour, when they were relieved. Each post had its little fire, which could be extinguished instantly in case of attack, whereby the men, as well as their coffee, were warmed. My first post was on the railroad track. The brigade officer discovering it was my first turn of duty gave me some special instructions as follows: I must not return the enemy's fire unless it should come pretty lively—not for two or three, or even more shots; then he would be with the reserve a few rods to the rear, on the road, and he would repair therewith to that portion of the line

which was hardest pressed, to me or to my neighbor, as occasion required; but in any event I must not retreat an inch; I must hold the line at all hazards. He also indicated the position of the division grand reserve as still farther to the rear on the same road. Now, I was perfectly ignorant of the practical meaning of the phrase "hard pressed," but the last direction I clearly understood, and reflecting upon the mile or two intervening between myself and camp, also upon the blissful condition of standing between two fires should we indeed be driven back, I concluded it would be quite as healthy to stick to the breast-work under any circumstances and settled my mind accordingly.

At ten o'clock, and again about two, I visited my sentinels. There was no moon and the sky was overcast sufficiently to conceal nearly every star. In making my rounds I went to my right post, thence forward to my right sentinel, then to the left, knowing the railroad would indicate my last man. Of course they were not in exact line, but scattered as cover was available. On more than one occasion, so intense was the darkness, I was obliged to kneel, and,

placing my head against the ground, relieve my man, not sixty feet off, against the sky, in order to ascertain his whereabouts. Once I had thus determined a sentry's location, and was making my way toward him, as I supposed, when suddenly, from some twenty feet to my left, came the low challenge, "Halt! who goes there?" "Oh, that's where you are!" was my reply. "Yes," said he, as I made my way toward him. I had mistaken my course and gotten thus far beyond the lines, a situation most interesting, not only from the possibility of encountering prowling scouts, but also because the men had orders promptly to shoot any one attempting to pass the lines. About four o'clock, the brigade officer notified me that the Johnnies were forming in line of battle on our front, and we must be ready for a brush at any instant, directing me at the same time to warn my men. I sent my sergeant to inform the sentinels, while I looked after the posts, and until daylight paced up and down the line seeing every man was wide awake. What rendered our condition the more enjoyable, were the facts that no abattis had yet been constructed on our front, that not an eighth of a mile

away was a thick wood providing excellent cover for our neighbors until they should be close at hand, that the Halifax road afforded superior facilities for transporting their troops, and that the picket fires revealed our forms clearly to their sharpshooters. Up to that time I had considered the moon a very decent creation, designed for the accommodation of lovesick youth. Since then I have had the greatest respect for her majesty—her benignant smile has been esteemed most precious. No disturbance occurred, however, and when about eight o'clock, Monday, twenty-seventh, I observed the relief coming down the road, I felt extremely good-natured. Most of that day was spent in the recovery of lost sleep.

Tuesday, twenty-eighth, the regiment fell in at the trenches at four o'clock, as on the preceding morn; it remained under arms until daylight. Both forenoon and afternoon I assisted the captain in drilling.

On Wednesday, twenty-ninth, large bodies of colored troops moved to the left, followed by apparently an unending stream of wagons. If I remember rightly, on the preceding day I observed Sheridan's cavalry moving in the same direction. Early in the

morning we received orders to pack and hold ourselves in readiness to march at short notice. This looked like moving. Accordingly every thing valuable was packed in our valises, save those articles considered indispensable on the march. Toward night we were directed to loosen the coverings of our "shebangs." More ominous yet. I patronized the company barber, that I might the better preserve a cool head during the events apparently imminent. Just after tea and as dusk was drawing on apace, while writing in my hut I was summoned to the door to view the most magnificent pyrotechnic display I ever witnessed. All the officers were watching it, and they unanimously testified they never beheld aught so brilliant. Off to the right five or six shells, sometimes eight, could continuously be seen exploding in mid air—on either side the flashing of their guns; and later the trajectories of the projectiles were readily determined by the blazing fuses. Yet not a sound disturbed the serenity of the hour —naught impaired the attractiveness of the scene. At length we retired to our huts, only to be called

out at half-past ten to the rifle trench, whence we were dismissed after an hour.

At four o'clock Thursday morning, thirtieth, we were directed to have all our men equipped and armed ready to form at an instant's notice, but on account of the driving rain they were permitted to remain in their huts. The storm continued until the middle of the afternoon when it cleared away finely. Thereupon we congratulated ourselves, for no one likes to march in mud; yet none of the line really expected marching orders. During the morning we could hear the sound of fighting from the distant and extreme left; at one time in the afternoon, nearer; cannonading and musketry, apparently at or about Fort Fisher. Wearied by the loss of sleep, I had turned in early, when the adjutant ordered all hands to headquarters. I dressed quickly and went; found all the officers present. We were directed to have the men pack, strike tents, load guns, but not cap them (all this to be done noiselessly), leave fires burning brightly, light neither pipe nor match, nor fire a gun until ordered, under penalty of being shot. We separated, notified our

respective companies, and at once made preparations for leaving. At nine o'clock the wagons were all packed and the regiment in line ready to march. After a time an orderly rode up to the colonel, gave the necessary order, and started for the next camp. He had scarcely left when a staff officer came up and countermanded the order. We were dismissed to our quarters but were not permitted to put on our roofs; therefore, for the first time in my life, I slept directly beneath the broad canopy of heaven.

At four o'clock Friday, twenty-first, we were in the trench as usual. It had just begun to sprinkle, and ere long it rained quite fast. When dismissed, some old tents were procured to about cover the "shebang" —that portion containing the bunk, entirely. My wet clothing I hung by the fire to dry, and lay down for a nap. Could you have seen me then you would have readily believed I was taking comfort. The floor was changed to mud, everything was damp, and the waters descended with no prospect of remission. Finally the teams unpacked. I put on other clothing which I wore two hours, when orders came to pack and be ready to start at a moments notice.

Back the things were hustled into the valise and speedily was I again in fatigue suit ready for instant duty. I proceeded to remove my tent roof, when another orderly appeared, the command was countermanded, and soon we were directed to fasten on our tents.

About one o'clock Saturday, April first, I was awakened by some shots close at hand; a moment or two later the long roll was heard springing from one regimental guard-house to another down the line from Fort Fisher with the rapidity of a rockets flight. As its advanced crest passed us on its way toward the Ninth Corps, the weird hour nor its fearful portent could impair the beauty of its sound, the charm of its magic progress. Almost instantly we were at the trench, and for an hour most patiently waited a call from our neighbors. But they did not favor us, so we returned to our peaceful cots.

At three o'clock, an hour earlier than usual lest we should be anticipated by our erring friends, we were again in line, and rested in line until daylight, as it proved for the last time. At eight o'clock I went on officer of the day, also, for the last time. In

the evening, just after dark, we were ordered to headquarters, when the colonel informed us that Thursday evening's programme would now be carried out. Commanders of companies immediately notified their first sergeants to form their men, and most speedily was the regiment in line, in heavy marching orders. The fires were left burning brightly, and as most of the "tents" were unroofed the camp presented an unusually cheery appearance. I frequently wondered what the Johnnies would think of our apparent frequent illuminations, and indeed, subsequently I ascertained they were sorely perplexed thereat. Distant batteries had hitherto been firing, but every thing was quiet on our front. The regiment was on the point of starting when the question arose, What shall I do, and when, and to whom shall I look for orders? So I approached the colonel and waited a suitable opportunity. Suddenly the neighboring works opened. It was indescribably magnificent—the brilliant flashes, the heavy reports and the shrill whistling of the shells. About that time he turned with "What is it Mr. Peck?" "I was waiting for orders, but as the charge is to be

made over here"—"What is that?" ejaculated he, meekly. I replied, perceiving it is not proper for a subaltern to know too much, "I was merely waiting for instructions." "Go to brigade headquarters and the brigade officer of the day will give them to you." I saluted and retired, subsequently discovering I had divined what was proper only for the field officers to know—that the assault would be made near Fort Fisher.

After the regiment had departed I reported at brigade headquarters and received orders to have every man at the breastwork the entire night; none must be allowed an instant's sleep; and in case of a counter attack, I must hold the line at all hazards. These were readily comprehended. I returned and posted my men in the trench, about twenty-five feet apart. During the remaining hours of that memorable night I paced my lonely beat, watching the lightening flashing guns, the glittering trajectory of the shells, and the fitful glare of their explosion, listening eagerly to every sound, striving to divine the position of my comrades, while equally intent that no danger should unexpectedly assail me. The

neighboring forts soon ceased because too retrocedent to damage aught but our recently advanced picket line. Forts Fisher and Sedgewick remained centers of attraction. It did seem as though they were trying pretty hard to hurt some one in those sections.

The morning hours of the day of rest were spent in gazing at light wreaths of sulphurous smoke gradually rising from the Ninth Corps front, an acceptable offering of incense from the altar of exalted self-sacrifice and patriotism. Clearly I heard cheering, as from three or four distinct charges. The earlier ones were broken off suddenly, as from a repulse; the last were much more prolonged, re-echoing and dying away gradually, as from victory. I am positive they proceeded from the Yanks by their quality. And still the hubbub continued with little remission until nearly noon. Later in the day I observed column after column of smoke rise toward heaven, and more and more remotely to our left. I accepted them as proofs of my comrades progress, the burning of abattis. And still later in the day when I heard of the gallant deeds of the regiment, how its colors

were the first planted upon the hostile works, and how our beloved Colonel Rhodes, than whom is no truer soldier, was himself the first to scale the battlements, though followed almost upon the instant by his entire command, a deep regret obtained that I had been deprived participation in the pleasure and perils of that never to be forgotten day.

Since daylight I had permitted the men, who were still kept at the breastwork, to take much needed sleep and rest where they were. Toward night I divided them into five posts, each consisting of five men and a corporal, one of whom was constantly standing on the parapet peering into the darkness. Powerful force, thought I, to defend a line for which the entire battalion was scarcely sufficient. About nine o'clock, having slept none since daylight Saturday, I was prevailed on by the sergeant of the guard to take a nap, he promising to call me at midnight or when the moon should go down. At three o'clock Monday morning, third, I woke with a start, finding it perfectly dark. I lit my candle, dressed, and was about opening my door, when a corporal came, rapped, and asked if I would

like to see Petersburg on fire, pointing to a bright light over that city. About four o'clock an explosion occurred, followed by a marked diminution of the crimson cloud. At light we were ordered to pack, our picket joined us, and the various details assembled at a neighboring camp, whence we took the Halifax road for Petersburg.

Passing at length through lines of abattis and rows of chevaux-de-frise of most perfect workmanship, we crossed, on a bridge composed of two logs, a ditch some twenty feet deep and equally wide, scaled a parapet towering nearly the same distance above our heads, crossed a small tract of very rough country intersected with deep ravines, and found ourselves within the suburbs of Petersburg. Here we halted for an hour, near to a little grocery that appeared not to have any proprietor; hence the boys helped themselves to what they desired — no one saying "Why do ye so?" The tobacco was promptly removed and distributed. Nothing else was found eatable save half a cask of prunes two or three years old, dry, and slightly mouldy — not a very tempting viand, yet most every one took a handful. Sundry

individuals appropriated little china and glass vases and statuettes as keepsakes, but I doubt if many of them reached the north. Just as we moved on I saw smoke pouring from one of its windows — some vagabond had fired the store. But we could not tarry to remedy the mischief for the order to march had been given.

We had nearly reached the centre of the city when loud cheers were heard from the right of the column and rapidly nearing. I looked up, and lo, President Lincoln accompanied by Generals Grant and Meade, with full staff and escort of cavalry. With hat in hand he graciously acknowledged the greetings of the soldiers, who enthusiastically swung their caps high in air, and made the city ring with their loud hurrahs. His careworn countenance was illumed with a benignant smile; it was the hour of triumph; he was receiving the reward of four years of unparalleled toil, anxiety and care. He was unrecognized by the late slaves who lined the streets in considerable numbers, but upon learning his identity they too joined heartily in the welcome. The white residents were for the most part invisible; some

could occasionally be discerned peeping through the half-turned blinds of the upper windows. As he passed I turned for one last lingering look, impressed that it was my only opportunity. Little did I imagine, however, that his noble career would be terminated so speedily and in such a manner. Those brief moments amply repaid me for what I had previously considered a serious mischance, and their recollection will be sacredly cherished to the latest moment of life.

We now turned to the left, passed the white wooden house where it was said General A. P. Hill died, and again we were in the open fields, hasting to rejoin our comrades. This territory had hitherto escaped the ravages of war, and bright peach-blossoms, tender leaves and azure sky, with attendant circumstances, conspired to place all in the very best of spirits. We travelled route step by the right flank, doubled files, resting occasionally for ten or fifteen minutes. In the afternoon we were ordered to rest in the wood by the roadside, while the Ninth Corps marched by us. I was indignant, for certainly on more than one occasion "Sheridan's heavy cavalry"

showed it could out-march as well as out-fight any other body of men in the Army of the Potomac; but of course I had to submit.

Once again we started and I marched on. At sunset I found myself, with Sergeant William A. Aymer, a re-enlisted veteran, and a half dozen men, on the heels of the Ninth Corps, with not a Greek cross in sight. How did that occur — where were the rest of the details? I don't know. I simply recall at this moment the dim outline of a chap on horseback, who looked rather hard at me once; but he said nothing, nor did I. At nine o'clock the Ninth Corps massed in an open field near a wood and bivouacked. I wished to pass on with my squad and overtake the regiment, but Sergeant Aymer positively refused; the men agreed with him that they could not march further; I did not see exactly how I could compel them to proceed, hence I yielded. We went to the outer flank of the corps, found an old apple tree and make a little fire. The men heated their coffee, warmed their meat, and ate their suppers. We then wrapped ourselves in our blankets and went to sleep.

On Tuesday, fourth, I waked with a start. It was very dark and very still. Here and there some faintly glowing embers could be discovered. Not a man of that mighty host was visible; not a sound was heard. I awoke my sergeant with the remark: "Come let us be off; the Ninth Corps has gone." "Guess not." said he. At that instant the reveille sounded — half-past five o'clock in the morning. In a few moments a thousand fires were brightly blazing, kettles boiling, sauce-pans frying. By seven our frugal repast was finished, and upon my direct order we started ahead of the Ninth Corps. We passed a few wagon trains and soon after nine overtook the Sixth Corps, resting by the roadside. Cordial greetings marked our return to our regiment. One man presented me with a small chunk of raw beef. I thrust it on the end of a pointed stick and held it over a neighboring fire until slightly brown, then straightway proceeded to devour it, for two days had elapsed since tasting any, and a portion of the time I had been on short allowance. While here staff officers rode up to each brigade and read the official announcement of the occupation of Richmond. The land

was slightly undulatory, so that I embraced in a single glance nearly the entire corps. It was most inspiring to witness the hats, caps and knapsacks tossed high in air; to hear the enthusiastic cheering, and to listen to the national anthems, which never sounded half so sweet as when thrown on that balmy spring air by those brigade bands. We marched that day until half-past seven o'clock in the evening, and then pitched our shelter tents, Lieutenant Carr and myself occupying one together. Of course we rested meanwhile — say ten minutes in an hour — the process being as follows: The leading brigade turned a little to one side of the road, marched its length parallel to the road and halted. The second brigade filed in to the rear of this, the third to the rear of the second, and so until the nine brigades of the three divisions of the corps were massed. As the last man of the last brigade marched on to the ground, the right man of the first brigade started. Thus each received his allotted portion of rest, while the corps was constantly moving.

On Wednesday, fifth, I arose early and took a bath, the first since leaving Petersburg. Where did I get

the water? Out of my canteen of course. That which remained unused from the preceding day. There was none to spare it is true, but then, water when used economically, will go a great ways. It was very satisfactory. I mention the fact simply to show that sundry so-called privations were the result of negligence or laziness, though it is certain even the canteen of water could not always be procured. We started about seven o'clock, and halted about ten for rations. General orders were read, thanking the men for their valor and congratulating them upon the work already accomplished, but now it might be necessary to test their devotion in other ways; other privations might be required in order to close the war promptly; they must be prepared to endure hunger. One and a half days, rations would be issued which must be made to last three days; then, if the teams were up, more would be supplied, elsewise they must make out as best they could. Moreover, no rations were to be issued to officers. "Encouraging," was my sole reflection. But lo, the colonel with accustomed forethought had sent in a requisition, with due amount of red ink and tape, probably,

for seven days rations for his officers, and had had it approved, so that, much to our joy, we had all the supplies we could carry and a surplus to distribute among our men. Moreover, by some lucky chance an extra box of hard-tack was sent to our company. The boys being raw recruits began some demonstrations of joy, but they were promptly silenced and the windfall quickly distributed.

I think it was this noon that we rested for a few minutes on a beautiful knoll, surmounted by a large two-story frame house that had not been painted for some years prior to the war, yet evidently belonged to a very well-to-do family. The grounds were in an excellent state of cultivation, and the entire plantation seemed pervaded with an unusual air of thrift. But alas, the residents had foolishly forsaken their homes. A window was raised; some one entered and opened the front door, and immediately the house was ransacked for meal and other edibles. Just as we left smoke was discovered issuing from crevices in the shingles; some vandal had undoubtedly fired it, and though nearly every one was loud in their execrations of the wanton deed, I presume it was impossible to dis-

cover the offender. Had the proprietors remained the residence had been preserved. This misdirected prudence was scarcely equalled by that other family, which, observing the approach of the Yankees, gathered its pigs and poultry in pens close beside the house, instead of turning them into the neighboring wood, where it would puzzle a native, much more a stranger, to find one. It chanced the path of our corps led directly through their back yard, and I well remember the amusing scene, as, having just passed the crest of a hill, I could observe in the near valley our advanced bummers surround the pens and plunge their glittering bayonets into piggy's flanks, and having captured bear them proudly off slung to their knapsacks. Nor did the poultry coops fare better; but no indignity was offered to the residents.

But to return to my story. It had grown decidedly warm, and most of the men devoted their halt to the task of lightening the knapsack. For nearly half a mile from the burning building, I could have walked on blankets, overcoats, old uniforms, albums, books, etc., each one ridding himself of surplus bag-

gage according to taste. After this rests were few and far between. In the afternoon we frequently passed through roads where the rail-fences, grass, and sometimes even the woods were all ablaze, kindled from the camp-fires of the retreating host. I noticed when we traversed such places, the column was well closed up. The air was like that at the mouth of a fiery furnace. The exertion began to tell upon me, though I carried nothing but my woolen and rubber blankets, in a coat-sling, so that about five o'clock the blood burst from my nostrils in profuse streams. This was precisely the manner in which I had expected to give out. Having been mustered conditionally, I escaped an examination that I doubt I could have passed — and here I was. I asked the captain what I should do. He said he did not see but what I must fall out. I told him I could not do that. I had always entertained a profound commiseration for those soldiers who had never smelled powder. I had not yet been under fire, and the next chance must not be missed, let the consequences be what they would. Fortunately we were passing a burning tobacco-house, fired in the way

already indicated. The men half loitered for an instant to view it, when I ran to the right of the regiment and asked the adjutant to lend me his horse for a few minutes. He readily assented, and dismounted. I took his place, permitted surplus blood to escape, loosened my clothing about the neck, cooling off gradually, returned the horse after an hour, and marched until I was so weary I could have slept while walking —until half past eleven. Fires were at once lighted, coffee made, meat fried, and supper made ready. As the only water available was that procured from a little rill which had just been forded by at least two brigades, I concluded I would take coffee for supper. It was slightly cloudy, but we guessed it would not rain before light, so spreading my rubber blanket on the ground and wrapping myself in the woolen one — with haversack containing clothing, coffee and sugar for a pillow, and my slouched hat for a nightcap — I composed myself to peaceful slumbers.

Next morning, Thursday, sixth, was awakened by a drizzling rain in my face. Concluded it was high time I was up, for I never thought it wholesome to lie

on damp ground, so I sprang at once to my feet. Soon reveille was sounded and breakfast served. Because the water was still muddy, I filled my canteen with coffee, though generally I allayed thirst by munching hard-tack. Our first course was in a north-easterly direction, but before we had made more than three or four miles we were faced about, returned almost to the spot whence we started, and then continued marching, with halts few and brief, in the pathway of the sun. Hour after hour we trudged, and trudged, and trudged; encouraged now and then by discovering, in adjoining fields, ambulances that might have been new in the Mexican campaigns; carts and wagons, indisputably the property of the first families of Virginia; caissons and gun-carriages, with pieces that evidently had not received an hours repairs since the Gettysburg campaign; and finally, dropped in the very middle of the road from utter exhaustion, old horses literally skin and bones, and so weak as scarcely to be able to lift their heads when some soldier would touch them with his foot to see if really they had life. Between three and four o'clock, I think, from some

commanding eminence, I caught my first glimpse of a distant line of battle. It was at rifle practice. The position of the men, the dead and wounded scattered over the ground, the officers galloping to and fro, corresponded so accurately to the delineations of Harper's Weekly, that it seemed but the recurrence of an old familiar scene. Soon the order was given, "Double quick—MARCH!" One old gray-headed fellow, over six feet high in his stockings, and so ungainly we never took him out on parades, had positively refused to lighten his knapsack in the least during all the fatiguing march. At this command he exclaimed, "Oh, captain, I can't keep up any longer; I am all tired out." The captain replied, "You should have thought of that before; you must keep up now." He renewed his energies and remained with us to the end of the engagement, but I never saw him again, for the self-imposed severities of the pursuit bore so hardly on his constitution that he was sent to the hospital, whence he was discharged at the close of the war.

We now advanced for ten or fifteen minutes almost at a run, then lapsed into a walk sufficiently long to

regain breath, and on again as before. During one of these half pauses we met a man in butternut suit, beardless, with very red, blooming cheeks and yet darkly tanned, long-haired, with broad-brimmed hat, and dilapidated horse equipments. I was amazed to see the cordial greetings he received, and the hearty hand-shakes from many of our officers and men, as we still kept marching on. It was none other than our Major (Henry H. Young, chief of scouts on General Sheridan's staff), who had just returned from a tour through the enemy's lines, and imparted information to his commander upon which the conduct of the impending battle would be based. About the same time we passed, drawn out one side the road, a battery of light artillery, the gorgeous shoulder-knots and elaborately embroidered jacket of whose commander, revealed it at once to be Battery H of the First Rhode Island Light Artillery, Captain (afterwards Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel) Crawford Allen, Jr., commanding. A little previous, as we came suddenly upon a clearing (most of this double-quick was through pineries), I caught sight of something on the ground, and looking down I discovered, almost

at my feet, a man about twenty-eight years of age, clad in a dark blue jacket with yellow trimmings, his countenance darkened, and a red spot in the centre of his forehead. "Suggestive," was the first reflection; and the second "Well, I have seen a dead cavalryman."

When the order for accelerated movement was given, I concluded there might be a little brush with the enemy speedily, but through some mistake supposed we were in the left brigade, and, therefore, as reserve, I should have a splendid chance to witness a fight. Suddenly, however, I heard the order "By company into line — MARCH!" and immediately I found myself in the line of battle. Glancing to the left, as the remainder of the battalion came up, I found that another brigade was to form the reserve, and that we were on the extreme flank, a position whose beauties are familiar to all. We were on the crest of a hill, where we halted for some minutes. A second glance towards the left revealed a farm-house in the distance. I noted its bearings, feeling sure a field hospital would speedily be established there, and ere long I might need to visit it. I also noted a

group of horsemen on a projecting knoll, gazing at the opposite height. They soon turned and rode up the rear of the line toward the right, affording me my first glimpse of General Sheridan and General Wheaton (Frank, Brevet Major-General, commanding First Division, a former colonel of the Second.) These and other accompanying dignitaries appeared decidedly rough, the former especially. I was now well satisfied that I was about to engage in my first battle. Silently commending myself to the kind consideration of the Supreme Arbiter of destinies, I at once opened, as it were, a mental photograph album containing the faces of all my friends, and those scenes to which I was deeply attached. Upon each I bestowed a single keen glance. About a dozen faces received a second; a third was bestowed on three or four. Finally two were studied tenderly, carefully — my mother, and one whose gentle form long since blended with common dust. Thus I gazed, how long I know not, but the entire pause could not have exceeded ten minutes, probably was not protracted half that time—until the colonel's clear voice sounded "ATTENTION!" when the album was instantly

closed, and now, business, was the only thought. Descending the hill, "Prepare to cross a marsh!" was passed along the line. I trod gingerly and on the hummocks, for I did not care to loose my whangs, broad, flat, low-heeled shoes of the pattern issued the enlisted men, the very best for continued heavy tramps. Three or four minutes later we found ourselves confronted by a hedge so high and so dense, it was impossible to see what was beyond. There was an involuntary pause — but only for an instant. Glancing around to find some available opening, I discovered the colors, some twenty paces to the left, had advanced about a yard and a half beyond the obstruction, and that every one in their neighborhood had clustered around the breach thus made. My own men were scattering to the right and the left. The colonel stormed, and officers shouted "Go ahead." but no perceptible progress was made. Thinking I could clear a passage for my own men, I thrust my hands into and through the hedge, spread them apart, and found a stream of muddy water a dozen feet wide. Visions of New England brooks at once rose before me. I was slightly held by numerous

withes, and moreover was unwilling to injure my hands with briars, so with the exclamation "Company G, *this* way," I boldly jumped for the middle of the stream expecting to land knee-deep in water. I went through the hedge and struck where I expected, but immersed above the sword-belt, and with feet so firmly imbedded it was impossible to stir them in the least. Thoroughly startled at the idea that perchance I had jumped into a Virginia quicksand, I seized hold of the farther bank and held on tightly. Finding I did not sink, I began working my feet gently to the right and left, soon extricated them from the mud, and then clambered out. Captain John A. Jeffrey's face now appeared at the opening. He enquired about the depth of the water. I reported, and warned him to let himself down easily. After assisting him and two enlisted men over, it seemed that every one was across and our line was formed.

As the brigade came into position, it was found some of the advanced regiments occupied more space in column than was requisite; they accordingly closed up to the right immediately on crossing the creek,

so that we found ourselves, on gaining the farther bank, separated from the remainder of the line by a very considerable interval. Due regard to our own well-being forbade this of course, so we faced to the right, without doubling, and marched until the distance was reduced to little more than fifty yards. As we started, a regular battery on the hill we so recently occupied, opened fire and dropped a ball in the morass some thirty feet short of us. It was amusing to see the men, naturally disturbed and irritated, shake their fists and hurl maledictions at the blunderers. A second shot just cleared our heads, but the third struck half way up the hill on our front, and the fourth reached the enemy's lines. At the same time the bullets began to fall as hailstones around us, and twigs from the hedge just passed covered the ground like snow-flakes. Under this double fire the men became slightly, but only slightly, nervous, and diminished the distance from breast to knapsack, so that when we faced again to the front the files were a trifle crowded. I endeavored to impart mathematical precision to my company, but speedily relinquished the impossible venture, with

the consoling reflection. "There'll be enough elbow room soon!" The men were now directed to crouch, as the bullets fell thicker and faster around us, but the colonel, Captain Gleason and two or three other officers, remained standing. Having, as a file-closer, no particular responsibility, I busied myself with observing the situation. We were at the foot of a moderately steep, turf-covered declivity over whose summit the foliage of dense trees was visible. Some twenty rods to our left this growth, sufficiently dark and threatening, extended down the hillside to the creek. Fine place for a flanking party, thought I; but the colonel said "Those woods are occupied by our cavalry," so professionally, I was satisfied. Still as none of us had seen indications of said occupation, we strongly suspected somebody had been lying. Thus it proved, though Colonel Rhodes was not the one at fault. Cause of false statement: fear that we would not do our duty, should we know the actual state of affairs—a most unwarrantable reflection on those first to surmount the ramparts of Petersburg. We did obey orders in complete distrust of the imposition. From the lieutenant-

colonel commanding to the humblest private, "If this be so, all right," was the thought, and sometimes the word.

Next I studied the line. I was always very curious as to the deportment of men under fire, so with rare eagerness turned from right to left and left to right, watching the movements of each individual. Every imaginable position was assumed, from the half erect to an apparent attempt to tunnel the hillside. It was especially comical to observe many of them bob their head as bullets passed close to their ears. Suddenly, "whit!" sped a ball by my right ear; involuntarily I imitated those I had been ridiculing, and thereafter stooped about two inches lower. And all this time, while the leaden missiles were as thick as mosquitoes in early autumn, I saw not a grayback, nor yet a rifle flash.

At length the order to charge was given. The tactical combination ensuing, I will not describe. How the regiment made a charge, virtually unsupported; how it received a murderous fire at short range, from three sides, and indeed from the left rear also; how it was driven to the foot of the hill, and,

after re-forming, again charged in time to participate in the bagging of eight thousand men and seven generals will be told by the commanding officer in a forthcoming paper. My narrative is strictly personal. At the word "FORWARD!" the men sprang to their feet, fired into the woods, and with a cheer dashed forward on the run. Gaining a few rods, they fell, loaded (officers meanwhile simply stooping), rose again, fired, and made a second dash, suggesting, even there, the Turcos of the Franco-Italian war of 1859, as delineated in *Harper's Weekly* and the *Illustrated London News* of that date. I was gratified thus to know that a soldier's fighting capacity depends upon the individual, not the uniform. I rejoiced at the power of adaptation to circumstances — for my men, at least, had received no such instruction. By this time there was more than sufficient elbow room.

With the third dash came the words: "Now close on them — Go for them!" I always had a horror of stepping on the wounded, especially my own; besides this was my first charge, and that over anything but smooth ground; so naturally I devoted

considerable attention to seeing where I was going. At length I imagined I had about reached the summit, and must be ready to close on the hostiles, so I looked up; but lo! no one was before me. Surprised and perplexed, I turned to the left and no one was there. The colors were already half way down the hill and moving deliberately to the rear; the soldiers on the extreme left had already reached the creek. Glancing now to the right, I found the nearest man, eight or ten feet away, was wheeling about. As I did not care to present any confederate with either sword, watch or revolver, and could offer but slight resistance when single-handed, I concluded to retrace my steps also, and accordingly commenced a march in common time to the rear.

In taking my rapid survey, I noticed thirty or forty "secesh" on a projecting knoll, enjoying a comfortable little target practice. I thought if any expert chap should take a fancy to send a ball after me, I prefered the bullet should pass through by the most direct route, reducing thereby all damage to the minimum; hence I made a half face to my left, and quietly travelled down the hill. Just before effect-

ing this change of direction, I saw one man run — the only one in the entire regiment. Now in such circumstances it is very natural to imitate that example, but I soliloquized, "If I were up there and saw a fellow running, I would send a ball after him, merely from love of mischief—just to hurry him up a little. Now I don't want any more bullets coming after me than is absolutely essential under the circumstances, so I guess I had better walk." When one third down the hill, I observed Corporal Thomas Parker, who had carried the State colors on many hotly contested fields, fall prostrate, dashing the flag to the ground. Now men were rather scarce in that neighborhood at that time, in fact each was doing as seemed to him good, and therefore I determined to go and pick it up; but that very instant Sergeant William Wathy, who was not more than twenty feet distant, sprang forward, raised the fallen flag, and was just straightening up when a bullet went across the top of his cap, at once bisecting and knocking it to the earth. He did not stop to repair damages, but bore away the flag, carrying it until Corporal Parker, who was only winded by a bullet in

his knapsack, returned and demanded its restoration. I had reached the foot of the hill, and was about thirty feet from the edge of the creek, when I felt a dull blow in the neighborhood of my left hip. I realized I was shot, and was at once curious as to the amount of damage. I looked down and saw the hole was too far to one side to implicate the groin; forgetting a possibly severed artery, I threw my weight on my left leg, and finding no bones broken, began to laugh as the ludicrousness of the whole affair flashed upon me. "You're never hit till you run," was my first reflection — not altogether correct, as I shall subsequently indicate — and my second, "Three weeks, lacking one day, and in the hospital! Such is glory." These investigations and reflections consumed not more than fifteen seconds. I do not believe the man who fired at me ever knew he winged his bird.

Do you want to knew how it feels to be shot? Ask your brother to step into the yard some bright February day, when the water is running freely in the streets, scoop a double handful of snow from the top of the nearest bank, spat it once only with hands

at right angles, and hurl it with ordinary force from a distance of twelve feet. The dull spreading sensation will be sufficiently accurate.

On reaching the border of the creek, I hesitated for a moment. I did not relish the idea of having that muddy water run through my side, moreover I was fearful it might hurt; yet no alternative presented, so I lowered myself gently, crossed, and looked for that farmhouse heretofore mentioned. Failing to discover it, I started for my former position on the crest of the hill. After trudging on a spell, using my sword meanwhile for a cane, I discovered myself directly in front of Captain Allen's battery. A cannoneer was beckoning to a fellow obstructing the range of one of the pieces, who at once ran toward the gun, delaying its fire so many seconds longer. The artilleryman's gesture indicated that I too was bothering them, so I made a square face to my left, and had stepped not half a dozen paces when a shell shrieked by, taking my benedictions to friends across the flood.

Passing to the rear of the battery, I occasionally met fellows whom I asked concerning the location

of a hospital, but could elicit no information. Attaining the crest, I spied the little farmhouse on the extreme left of the original line of battle, and with glad heart thitherward directed my weary steps. Twenty rods this side I met a couple of the ambulance corps, and asked if a hospital was there. "Yes, where are you wounded?" I indicated the spot. "Let us assist you there." "No; I can walk." "But let one of us take your arm." I consented and started; but if the other had not been ready to seize my right, I should have fallen, dragging the former upon me. They entirely sustained me the rest of the way.

When within a hundred feet of the house, I was laid upon the grass, and one went for a surgeon. Upon arrival he asked where I was wounded. I showed him.

"Let me examine it."

"What for?"

"To see if a bone is broken."

"There is no bone broken."

"But I must examine."

"Well, let some one hold my hands."

Clasping them, an attendant firmly held them, while the surgeon explored the wound with his index finger — at least he said he did — I felt nothing. He remarked, "Lieutenant, you have had a very narrow escape." "I am perfectly well aware of it," was my response. He took my silk handkerchief, rinsed it thoroughly in cold water, and laid it on the double wound. That was all the dressing it received in three days.

Next thing I knew I didn't know much of anything. I was winking and endeavoring to open my eyes. Soon I discovered tree branches and men wearing caps. I thought I must be in a street fight in Providence, and wondered how I came there, for I felt that did not exactly accord with my style. I opened my eyes a little wider; hearing returned to my ears and the cannon's roar restored me to myself. Just then a surgeon who had been sent for by a faithful soldier, Private William A. Lincoln, under the impression I was dying, knelt by my side and asked how I felt.

"All right now, only I should like a little water."

"I'll have something for you in a minute," and in

an instant after he added, presenting a tin cup, "Here, drink this."

"What is it?"

"Whiskey."

"No, I don't drink whiskey."

"But you must drink this;" so down it went; but the potation was perfectly tasteless — that sense also had failed me.

A few minutes later I heard the order, "Fire second fuzes;" I instantly inferred the Johnnies must be pouring from their wooded hill-top in disagreeable numbers and might be descending to the creek. I began calculating what resistance I could offer should they raid on that farmhouse. Meanwhile the guns were hurling rotten shot with marvellous rapidity; but they soon slacked up. I felt the wave had been swept back, and I might rest in ease and contentment.

An hour later it began to rain, so Private Lincoln went to the house to secure, if possible, my removal thither, for every other officer had been quartered there as soon as he was brought in. He returned with a litter on which I was taken to the house. I

was then placed on the floor of a room in which there were two beds, each occupied by two severely wounded officers, while in the third corner, on the floor, were at least a half dozen more. The only place found for me was in front of one of these beds; my head close beside the hall doorway, where stood the operating table, with surgeons working the entire night, my body forming the bound of a passage-way to the kitchen door in the fourth corner, whence people continually passed and repassed. Yet when my wet clothes had been removed (a delay which caused a three months cough and nearly cost my life) and myself wrapped in a couple of army blankets, I slept quietly, happily, until daylight.

Friday, April seventh, awoke quite refreshed. Asked Lincoln to look on my right shin and see if he could find any mark of a bullet there. He said "No." I told him I had been struck by a spent ball there, before I had advanced a dozen paces on the charge. He began to laugh; you probably have heard of men who imagined them selves shot because a bullet struck within a couple of yards. Slightly irritated, I told him to get my pants from the kitchen and examine

them. He returned, and showed three bullet holes at the spot I had designated — a fold in the wet cloth adhering closely to my person, had saved my right foot. My attendant now seemed satisfied that any statement of mine relating to the recent affray could be depended upon.

After dressing came breakfast. This consisted of two hot biscuits and a cup of beef tea. Orientalmanners were adopted during the repast. At ten o'clock the surgeons had completed their work, and most of them mounted their horses to overtake their regiments. Toward noon the ambulance train came up. Some one asked me if I could ride sitting up. "I guess I can," was the reply, "but don't know for surety." "Where are you wounded." I indicated the spot. "You had best ride lying down." So when all the other wounded officers had been provided for, save three or four too weak for removal, I was borne to an ambulance and placed therein, flat on my back, head toward the horses, and my sound limb next the side of the carriage. A confederate adjutant of heavy artillery, who had lost his right leg just below the knee, in this his first battle, was placed

on the opposite side, while between was laid an enlisted man who had been wounded through the chest. We were so snugly packed with extra blankets, it was impossible to move a muscle, and hence long before the train was packed, half-past two o'clock in the afternoon, I was perfectly familiar with the location of every prominent bone in my back. Meanwhile I found comfort in the reflection that the jar of the ambulance over corduroy might sometime free us from durance vile. It did effectually. We had not moved a dozen rods when I succeeded in twisting myself half way on my side and thus permitted my companions to change their positions. This was accomplished on a good road, but soon we entered upon the full enjoyment of corduroy. We formed but a light load, and when we passed over rough places — obstacles one would not think of driving an ox team over at home, as our driver forcibly expressed it — whether trotting or walking, we received their complete benefits. Frequently we would be tossed six inches, as we bounded over the logs at the foot of steep declivities; again, as a wheel plunged into some deep hole, the carriage

would lurch like a ship in a heavy sea, and seem ready to capsize; and this was often followed almost instantaneously by a roll in the opposite direction. I particularly remember one occasion, when the ambulance preceding ours was nearly mired. Our driver would not venture farther, so the rail fence was taken down and thrown into the wayside ditch, to diminish its depth as much as possible. Then down our carriage plunged and up the steep bank; next over a cornfield, with stubs still standing, for a quarter mile; then over the ditch again to the road. Now all this was fun for me, as I clung to one of the bows supporting the top, and kept myself in such a position that the bouncing came on soft parts, moreover thereby I was somewhat steadied, but not so with my companions. The union soldier had nothing to hold to, and he groaned heavily. The confederate officer was equally unfortunate; as he was thrown up the stump of the amputated limb would drop by its own weight, and when he came down the end would, of course, strike first. His cries of agony may well be imagined; but then each thought only of himself. At times I engaged with

the adjutant in quiet conversation, chiefly on the abilities of various confederate leaders. At eight o'clock, after a six hours ride, we reached Burkesville Junction, and were placed under perforated canvas, on the soft sides of pine boards.

Thus it was I scraped acquaintance with the dogs of war. When next they howl around these Plantations, I shall proceed at once to interview them, I hope with greater profit to Uncle Sam.

Soldiers' and Sailors' Historical Society
OF RHODE ISLAND.

PERSONAL NARRATIVES:

Third Series, No. 5.

CAMP AND HOSPITAL.

Anon.
GEORGE B. PECK, Jr.

Geo. B. Peck Jr.

Late Lt. 2nd R. I. V.

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OF EVENTS IN THE

WAR OF THE REBELLION,

BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE

RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

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CAMP AND HOSPITAL.

BY

GEORGE B. PECK, JR.,

[Late Second Lieutenant, Second Rhode Island Volunteers.]

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CAMP AND HOSPITAL.

In accordance with special orders from the war department, I was mustered December 14, 1864, as a Second Lieutenant in Company G, Second Regiment, Rhode Island Volunteers, upon condition that I should enlist a sufficient number of men to fill its ranks. I realized at once the importance of my new dignity, for the very next act was to "swear in" a recruit. This man, under the wing of an "agent," had been dogging the footsteps of the national officials ever since the preceding afternoon. Then it had been discovered that because of the new arrangements there was none qualified to enlist him. The agent manifested great concern, and in reply to a remark made by Major Henry C. Jenckes, of the old Second, a few moments previously, "We will fix all that in five minutes," said, "I wish you would; the fellow is rather restless, and may jump me. I had

to spend a lot of money and work hard to keep him over night!" The recruiting agent evidently had an eye to the "head money."

I at once secured a desk room in the front of a hat store at 10 Market Square, and snugly ensconced in a capacious arm chair, patiently awaited visitors. The store was occupied by Alexander M. Massie, youngest brother of James W. Massie, D. D., LL. D., of London, who came to this country in 1863, on a mission of sympathy and love from the "Union and Emancipation Society," of Manchester. My duties consisted simply in administering the oath to eager aspirants for glory brought in by zealous runners, and signing enlistment papers; also in giving orders on the State Quartermaster-General to the runners for their premium in securing the recruit. Trade was not brisk. During the month I received but fifteen callers, five of whom were subsequently rejected by the mustering officer, and a sixth jumped when he found his "chum" was ordered to remain at home.

On Monday, January 2, 1865, new orders were received from Washington by Colonel Neidé, the

State Superintendent of recruiting service. In accordance therewith the camp near Mashapaug pond, which had been the first military home of companies organized to refill the Second Rhode Island, was broken up the succeeding day, and the fourteen men then in camp were transferred to the barracks on the back side of the cove, the depot for recruits for all other organizations. It was located on the right bank of the Woonasquatucket, opposite the building formerly used as the State Prison. I was placed on waiting orders, with directions to report each morning for instructions. These came on the 13th, and were to the effect that on the following day I must report for duty at the United States Draft Rendezvous (more widely known as the Conscript Camp) at Grapevine Point, then within the limits of Fairhaven, but now a part of New Haven, Ct.

On the 14th I took the midday train for New Haven, having in charge two musicians and a box of dishes. The latter contained 104 tin plates, 73 tin cups, 44 knives, 28 forks, and 30 spoons of various sizes. It is worthy of mention that those of my command who had preceded me had contrived to get

along with 62 plates, 32 cups, and 5 knives. Naturally, therefore, they were much rejoiced to receive a more ample supply of certain articles generally considered indispensable. Concerning the men, I was told to keep my eye upon them, and see that by no possibility they should slip through my fingers. A quiet hint was dropped that the revolver is an excellent persuasive when other arguments fail. They were volunteers, however, in the strict sense of the term, and thoughts of "leaping the bounty" never entered their heads.

Upon reaching camp I reported to the officer in charge, Captain Edward I. Merrill, of the Third Regiment, Veteran Reserve Corps, an elderly gentleman, originally from Maine. He informed me the headquarters of the Post were in the city, but that they were closed for the day and would not be open until Monday. I then visited the barrack assigned Company G, distributed required dishes, and made such other arrangements as were possible for the comfort of the men. Tarrying subsequently for a few moments in the officer of the day's private office, a soldier apparently eighteen years of age was brought

in, charged with having drawn a knife on the patrol. He protested his innocence, and strict search failed to reveal any weapon, yet he was placed in the guard-house for safe keeping, in accordance with an axiomatic principle of that institution,—a soldier is supposed to be a rascal until he is proved to be honest.

Sunday afternoon I visited camp, appointed three lance corporals, and detailed one of them, with five privates, to guard the barrack door, with orders to permit no one to enter unless he came from Rhode Island; if any member of the Company had business with others he might transact it outside. A half hour later, while conversing with the provost marshal, Captain James Rice, of the First Vermont Heavy Artillery, a rifle shot was heard close at hand. The Captain sprang for his repeater, which always stood fully loaded in the corner, and then rushed out to ascertain the cause of the alarm. The guard, thoroughly equipped, were instantly at their post by the gate. Every one was on the *qui vive*. It was soon discovered that no revolt was imminent, but simply a "break" had occurred of three men for lib-

erty and an extra bounty. Still the "assembly' called the general recruits together; they were marched to their quarters, and though it was yet very early, were locked up for the night. Meanwhile Captain Rice, with another officer and two soldiers, jumped into a hack standing just outside the gate, and ordered the driver to start, at full speed, in a given direction in pursuit of the fugitives. Fortunately the driver misunderstood his orders, and drove very differently from the course he was told to follow. Two of the men had selected a path before untried, and soon the party found themselves alongside the culprits, who were making their best speed over the fields. The driver was now ordered to stop, but he found it impossible to rein in the galloping horses as promptly as was desired, so Captain Rice knocked out the window and blazed away. The horses were frightened, but no one was hurt. Soon, however, the team was stopped. All jumped to the ground and ran with eager haste. One of the deserters was speedily overtaken, and when ordered to surrender, halted and permitted himself to be placed quietly in custody of the officer. The other

strained every nerve to escape, but with no avail. One of the soldiers had nearly overtaken him, and was calling upon him to halt, when he suddenly stopped, wheeled around, and gave his pursuer a blow between the eyes, sending him reeling backward. But the second soldier was close behind. He did not relish the treatment of his associate, so he drew his bayonet from his belt and tapping the fellow gently over the head with the shank, felled him to the earth. Captain Rice and the other soldier now came up, and, with their assistance, the temporarily disabled bounty-jumper was placed in the carriage, and driven back to camp in charge of the two officers. The two deserters were handcuffed as soon as captured. The third man had turned directly toward New Haven, purposing to cross Mill river on the ice. He reached the bank, but while gazing in blank astonishment at the unexpected sight of open water before him, a dropsical soldier of the Invalid Corps, as the organization was popularly termed, came up and said, "You'll catch cold standing there; you'd better go back with me!" Without a word of remonstrance the fellow turned, and the twain pro-

ceeded quietly to camp conversing on indifferent themes.

The determined resistance to recapture offered by the second fugitive was deemed positive proof that he had a considerable sum of money secreted upon his person. Accordingly he was twice searched with unusual rigor under the supervision of the officer of the day, the provost marshal and the assistant provost, but without result. They were about to consign him, though reluctantly, to the guard-house, when Captain Ketchum, who chanced to be occupied elsewhere, sent word that he would like to examine him after they had finished. Now this Ketchum was a Brooklyn boy, consequently acquainted with the ways of the metropolis, and what he did not know of certain departments of practical science, is scarcely worth the knowing. As soon as he was disengaged, he hastened to the guard-room and commenced a thorough inspection *de novo*. Nothing was discovered from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet. Every garment had been searched but the boots. He examined one all over, inside and out, by sight and by touch, yet nothing was revealed.

Next he tapped on the sole with his knuckles, and then on the heel. "Ah! that is hollow!" he exclaimed, and seizing a bayonet instantly pried it off, and a fine roll of greenbacks tumbled upon the floor. "Now don't spoil the other boot," he continued, "let's see if we can't discover the secret lid." This was found after a few minutes' careful investigation, and a second roll of bills obtained, amounting to $1,100, with a small package containing a diamond pin and a gold ring. These were deposited to the man's credit with the paymaster of the post, and he was placed in durance vile.

But how could this break occur when the camp was encircled with a tight board fence not less than a dozen feet in height, at whose base paced the ever watchful sentry of the Reserve Corps? At one point a two-story house had been constructed on its line to provide quarters for the permanent officers of the institution. This was divided on each floor transversely, affording some half dozen sections lighted by a window at each end. By the side of that, on the inner extremity, was a door opening upon a narrow platform, which extended the entire front of the

building. These sections were subdivided by a light partition and door, so that the front part served as an office; the rear, looking out upon green fields and pleasant gardens, as a bed-room. The rooms on the second floor were reached by a balcony and stairway at the east end of the building. One of the sections on the lower floor chanced to be unoccupied. The lock was opened either by a bent wire or a skeleton key, and immediately closed by the same means. Passing directly into the rear room they shut the door behind them, and were secure from detection until every arrangement had been completed, when they dashed through the window and made off at full speed. The sentinel at the foot of the stairs hearing the crash rushed up the steps, and, discovering the fugitives, blazed away, thereby sounding the alarm.

On Monday morning, January 16th, I reported to Colonel A. Cady, at his headquarters on the second floor of Brewster Building. I found him to be a fine looking and most courteous gentleman, tall and erect, though hair and moustache were completely silvered; dignified, yet kindly expressioned, a per-

fect model of the old type of soldier. He received me more cordially than his appearance had led me to expect; questioned me at length concerning recruiting interests in Providence, the prospects of my regiment, and various Rhode Islanders whom he had met. Upon retiring he told me to take orders directly from Captain Merrill. Colonel Cady also held authority over a military hospital occupying the building and grounds of the State Hospital, which had been leased for that purpose at a merely nominal rental.

During the two months I remained at the Draft Rendezvous I found a pleasant and comfortable home at the Madison House, State street, New Haven. Captain and Mrs. Rice boarded there, as well as three or four bachelor officers, which made it the more agreeable. I spent two or three hours every forenoon at Grapevine Point; the remainder of my time was devoted to reading and study. Sundays I went out in the afternoon. On the 22d, while sitting in the Provost Marshal's office, two men came in, one of whom informed the clerk that the other had some business to attend to. Now it was

customary to observe the Sabbath within that precinct, but the clerk good-naturedly permitted the second to proceed. He had not uttered a dozen words when a Captain who was also sitting in the room looked up, and, recognizing the person, poured forth such a torrent of invective and abuse, that the fellow was glad to leave the room without continuing his story. He had formerly been in this Captain's regiment, but had deserted and enlisted twice since. While no other officer would have deported thus, the provocation was commensurate. About the middle of the afternoon a rifle shot was heard, but no special stir accompanied it. After a few minutes some started across the enclosure in direction of the sound, others of the veterans passed out of the gate on the chase, while Captain Rice seized his seventeen-shooter, and another officer took his. Jumping into a sleigh, the two, with a driver, started off at a gallop, but soon discovered there was no stampede, and ere long all were back at camp bitterly regretting it was a false alarm, as they were just in the humor for a hunt.

Upon reaching camp Tuesday morning, 24th, I

was informed that the denizens of the guard-house had tunnelled out during the night, and all who cared to go, twenty-six in number, had left for parts unknown. Some, possessed of greater prudence or timidity, preferred to remain where best acquainted. The officers seemed greatly surprised at this feat, but I had always wondered how any sane man could have ordered a guard-house to be placed within six feet of the fence. The idea of a subterranean tunnel had entered my mind at sight, but deeming it unbecoming a raw recruit to counsel veterans, I said nothing. The scapegraces had been engaged on it for weeks, removing the flooring and bringing the excavated earth out in their pockets when set to policing the camp. A sheet-iron floor prevented a repetition of the performance. Six of the men were recaptured that very morning, one of whom was a member of my company. He had endeavored previously to desert from Mashapaug. When we finally left camp for the transport, bound to City Point, a sergeant with loaded rifle and fixed bayonet marched on either side of him with instructions to shoot him should he move an inch from his place.

Yet in front of Petersburg he proved himself a most excellent soldier, and was one of the eleven men of Company G who accompanied Captain Gleason and myself in the charge at Sailors' Creek. The rest of the seventy present and fit for duty after the capture of Petersburg, who were not detailed as guards at various points, had dropped by the roadside one after another, utterly exhausted from the severity of the march. This man simply desired the double bounty so many had secured.

As I was taking my accustomed Sunday afternoon promenade to camp on the 29th, I met Captain Ketchum with five hundred recruits under guard, on their way to the transport which would take them to the seat of war. This was the toughest set of fellows that ever graduated from that school. The following facts which came to the knowledge of the officers, though of course not witnessed by them, will sufficiently establish the hardness of their character.

The general recruits, substitutes and conscripts, were quartered in the second and third stories of a large building previously used as a factory. They

were assigned to temporary companies, which were divided equally between the respective floors. They were marched out about 10 o'clock each morning for the purpose of thoroughly ventilating and policing the barracks, and marched in about three o'clock in the afternoon, when they were locked up for the night. Of course in unpleasant weather, and I believe at other times, at almost any hour they desired, the men were permitted to return to their quarters, but all were obliged to appear in line to answer to their names at those instants. Now it was quite the custom for the substitutes, who generally were proficient in every department of iniquity, to "go through" every new man who looked at all neat and tidy. And this was done not only when he was taking his first sleep, but even before—while yet he considered himself wide awake. While some engaged his attention, others would appropriate such portions of his outfit as they desired, and it was absolutely impossible for any one to discover the culprit or find the stolen goods.

One night it seemed as though they had resolved to outdo themselves. Sometime past midnight they

"raided" a raw recruit, stripped him of every particle of clothing, and then thrust him down the water closet. The poor fellow fortunately escaped serious accidents in his descent, and upon reaching the vault had sufficient presence of mind to seek for and find the boards which covered the outer portion of the pit. Pushing them aside he was gradually emerging to fresh air, when a sentinel discovered him and fired. The man begged for mercy, which the guard promptly granted, upon discovering the state of the case. The victim was well cared for, but no part of his outfit could ever be found.

None will be surprised to learn that the doors from these apartments to the hallways consisted of the strongest grating, and were secured with heavy locks and bolts; also that outside, by day and by night, stood from four to six veterans with loaded rifles and fixed bayonets. When the officer of the day made his grand rounds at night, or visited the place by day, a soldier always followed him, ready to use his rifle at a half second's notice, and the officer's revolver was conveniently placed just before entering. For nearly a month before this squad was sent

off, two men followed their superior. His life would not have been worth insuring had he entered alone, and even despite all precautions, attempts thereon were by no means infrequent.

The extreme recklessness of these men is still more apparent from the fact that before the transport had passed Sandy Hook, it had been fired three times. Their intention, evidently, was to necessitate the beaching of the vessel, thereby enabling them to swim ashore, skedaddle to another State, reenlist, and secure still another bounty. But Captain Ketchum was the right man for the emergency. He informed them that when he heard the next alarm he should order the hatches battened down, and would leave them to extinguish the flames they had kindled. They knew he meant what he said, and consequently he was not troubled farther. There were scarcely sufficient boats for the crew and the guard.

The *morale* of the recruits (and that word is here used in a broad sense to include all enlisted men bound to the front) varied according to their class. Conscripts seldom occasioned trouble or attempted desertion. A man who intended to avoid all military

duty would previously have provided a substitute or placed himself north of the Canada line. Generally they were men who had been deterred by family or business considerations from volunteering, and yet were not insensible to the personal claims of the government in its hour of danger. While they could not anticipate the call of duty, they would not evade it. Substitutes were for the most part foreigners, with no sympathy for the cause or the country. When bounty-jumping had been proved a comparatively safe profession, many from New York and other large cities engaged therein, while some crossed the ocean to participate in this the easiest and most remunerative of all exciting occupations. Had the rigors of martial law been less frequently remitted, and flagrant derelictions of duty, whether by plain blouse or double-starred shoulder-straps, been invariably followed by peremptory mandates to kneel on one's coffin, humanity and the national treasury would alike have gained inestimably. But some of the substitutes engaged near the close of the war had previously performed their whole duty to their country by serving a full three years' enlistment,

and others were of that better class of foreigners who generally volunteered. To such, of course, the above remarks are inapplicable. The volunteers included men of every shade of sentiment intervening between, and even encroaching upon, the classes already alluded to; also vast numbers of youth as yet scarcely attained to man's estate. With few exceptions they faithfully fulfilled the obligations assumed.

One fact should not be overlooked when comparing the volunteer of '64 with that of '61. Those who responded to the earlier calls for troops rushed forth with an eager outburst of enthusiasm, positive that every rebel would be exterminated in less than a year, ignorant of the perils and hardships of war, mindful chiefly of the storied beauties of the sunny south, of their escape from frigid storms, and of the victor's laurels awaiting them. Those who donned the blue in later days deliberately girded themselves, perfectly realizing the consequences. They had seen the sick and the maimed, had heard of Andersonville and Salisbury and Libby, and had read of the swamps of the Chickahominy, the sand-hills of Mor-

ris Island, and the bayous of the Mississippi. They were sensible that, though ignorant and inexperienced, they must encounter tried veterans from scores of battle-fields. The increased bounties were neutralized by the depreciations of the greenback; they rarely prompted an enlistment, though sometimes determining the place. Besides, of what weight was money compared with life? And places of honor would be anticipated by older soldiers! None displayed more self-denying patriotism than men who entered the ranks of our vast armies during the last two years of the war.

When the last of Captain Ketchum's command had been safely secured below deck on the transport, I went out to camp and found twenty-five of my men on guard. I esteemed this quite a compliment; for hitherto only members of the Veteran Corps, and of Hancock's Corps, (an organization of veterans projected but never effected,) had been entrusted with such responsibility. From that time until our departure, the same confidence was reposed in Rhode Island men, and to such an extent that, on February 11, all the available men of Company G, forty-two

in number, with six members of Company H that had arrived the day previous, were detailed for duty. In no instance was the Commander's trust betrayed.

During the forenoon of February 6th, Peter Haley, fifer, borrowed a comrade's pipe for a smoke. That was nothing remarkable. He returned it duly filled. That was very proper. But when the owner proceeded to take his smoke he suddenly discovered the bowl contained sulphur, saltpetre, and charcoal, as well as tobacco. Natural consequences ensued, but the fifer continued his amusement with five hours of equestrian performances and a night in the guard-house.

On Sunday, February 12th, I had the pleasure of officiating for the second time as officer of the day. Routine business was scarcely completed when I observed a very woebegone chap standing near me in the guard-room. "What is wanted?" "I want to go out!" "Can't help it—don't let anybody out." "But I've got my discharge," said he, beginning to cry. "That makes no difference, you can't go out." Then came real boo-hooing with lots of crocodile tears, necessitating a vigorous use of the coat-sleeve.

Sergeant Green, of the Seventh Rhode Island, officer of the guard, now spoke up. "Don't you know any better than that? What do you mean by addressing your superior officer in that way? Take off your hat; assume the position of a soldier and state your business in a proper manner!" The man straightened up, bared his head, and in broken accents continued, "I came in with a friend who was one of that squad that got here yesterday, and he wanted me to stay all night and the officer let me, but I want to go out now!" and another torrent of tears gushed forth. Sergeant Green now demanded his discharge, which was promptly produced, and submitted to my inspection. It was correct for January 25, and issued, if I remember correctly, by an Ohio Colonel. "Can't help that; you've had time enough to enlist half a dozen times since then." And still he sobbed as the briney rivers flowed anew. Then Sergeant Green commenced: "Is your name James E. White?" "Yes!" "You lie!" thundered the sergeant. "And you are five feet nine inches high?" "Yes!" "That's another lie! And your hair is black, and your eyes dark brown,

etc.? (the unfortunate fellow continued, nodding assent). This is all nonsense!" Then I told our victim to step outside the door for a moment. After a short deliberation I sent him in charge of Sergeant Green to Captain Merrill, who referred them to Captain French, special supervisor of general recruits. He was speedily proved to be a Connecticut substitute, who had, it is true, served one enlistment, but now desired money instead of glory. He was at once provided with comfortable quarters in the guard-house, to meditate upon the fate of "the best laid plans of mice and men." The preliminary search revealed $60 in greenbacks, a receipt for $480, a pocket knife, and two diaries. The discharge paper was unquestionably his own.

Early next morning, before I was relieved, one of my men was brought to me under the following circumstances. For some time he had complained of feeling very ill, but the post surgeon would never excuse him from duty. Sunday morning he attended on sick-call as usual, when the doctor, exchanging glances with the sergeant, ordered him taken to the hospital. The poor fellow had not been in bed ten

minutes before he rose, jumped out the window, and was back at his quarters. Terrible illness, that! Monday morning he was detailed for camp guard, but he positively refused either to attend sick-call or go on duty. Hence he was brought to me and his story told by the sergeant. It was my first knowledge of the case. I told him he must visit the surgeon, or go on guard, or take the consequences. He positively refused to do either. Considering his bump of perversity unduly developed, I promptly ordered him to be placed on the "horse" until he should be willing to do the one or the other, I cared not which. When the command was given he commenced explanations, but he was informed I had nothing more to say. I discussed the matter with Lieutenant Howard of the Fourteenth New Hampshire, who relieved me, and the result was I left directions that he should be kept exercising from nine to twelve and two to five each day, until he preferred other occupation. The day was extremely severe. The "horse's" back was higher than the top of the fence, so the poor unfortunate had the full benefit of a piercing northwest wind, rushing down the valley

of Mill river, with fearful impetuosity. No stirrups were provided; the comforts of his situation may be imagined. Subsequently I ascertained that twenty minutes after I left camp, Captain Merrill chanced to see him and ordered him taken down. The next morning he attended sick-call and was excused from duty.

An important feature of the camp was its band. This was composed of musically inclined recruits, who were detained as long as possible on their way to the front, that this important adjunct of military life might always present a creditable appearance. On Friday evening, February 17th, as I sat writing in my room at the Madison House, strains of martial music suddenly burst upon my ear. It was a serenade complimentary to Captain Rice, our Provost Marshal, who was justly very popular. The pen was instantly dropped, and another listener added to the group on the balcony. At the conclusion of a varied programme finely rendered, Captain Rice invited the band to the dining hall, where, with the assistance of Captain French and myself, they disposed of an oys-

ter supper, elaborately, though hastily prepared, for the serenade was a perfect surprise.

One week later, about two P. M., the band gave a concert at the camp. The general recruits were marshalled near the band-stand as a battalion of eight companies, of about fifty men each, in column of divisions closed in mass. Knapsacks were then unslung and placed upon the ground, affording excellent seats for the men. The other soldiers consulted their own tastes regarding the performance. The officers occupied a balcony facing the battalion. Only two ladies were present on this occasion, though in warmer weather their attendance was large. The programme required more than an hour for its rendition, which was in a style worthy of high commendation, especially if the brief periods of membership are considered.

On Monday morning, February 27, a promenade concert was given under the auspices of the officers of the Draft Rendezvous and Knight Military Hospital at Music Hall, New Haven, for the purpose of securing funds to establish a Soldiers' Rest. It was the most brilliant affair of its kind that had ever

taken place in that city. The hall was superbly decorated with flags and flowers. The ensigns of foreign nations were generously provided by the celebrated showman, P. T. Barnum, and, hanging in festoons around the sides of the hall, attracted special attention. On the front of the galleries were portraits of President Lincoln, Governors Buckingham and Trumbull, and the prominent generals of the day. On either side of the stage was a brass howitzer, with stacks of arms, piles of grape shot, and groups of sabre bayonets picturesquely arranged, while over them hung nineteen battle-flags of Connecticut regiments, each one bearing unmistakable proof of the gallantry with which they had been borne over many fields of carnage. At the rear of the stage and beneath an arch of brilliant gas jets equalling in number the States of the Union, was a large figure of the Goddess of Liberty, draped with the Stars and Stripes, and holding the American flag. The bower was surmounted by a large and richly gilded eagle. Music was furnished by one of the famous bands of the country, that of the Third Regiment U. S. Artillery, numbering thirty pieces, then stationed at

Fort Trumbull. The assemblage was composed of the wealth, beauty and fashion of New Haven, with honorable delegations from New York, New London, Bridgeport and Hartford. Conspicuous on the floor was Lieutenant George W. Darling, of the First Rhode Island Cavalry, also of the Draft Rendezvous. He was accompanied by the most graceful and elegantly attired of Fairhaven's daughters — a lady who favored him with her society many subsequent years. The concert lasted from eight to eleven, and was followed after an hour's intermission for supper, by a hop, which continued until 4 A. M. It was a success financially, as well as socially. More than five thousand dollars were realized from the evening's entertainment.

Late Sunday evening, March 12th, the propeller "Euterpe" reached Long Wharf, New Haven, and next morning Company G bade the Conscript Camp a long farewell. By ten o'clock a column was formed on the parade in the following order: Post Band; Company G, under command of Lieutenant Carr, in heavy marching orders, four ranks, double file, with three days' rations, but without arms or cartridge

boxes; three hundred and odd general recruits, also in four ranks, but flanked on either side by a file of men from the Veteran Reserve Corps, with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets, ready to suppress in the most summary manner any attempt to break. When all things were ready the order was given, the gates thrown open wide, and in step with soul inspiring strains of martial music we marched forth to — glory! New Haven streets were too familiar with the spectacle to devote special attention, and the pier was reached without incident. As we filed upon the steamer's deck, the question naturally arose, which of us go to victory and which to death. Then I realized my individual responsibility as I had not before. Captain Sanford, of the Twenty-second New York, and Lieutenant Darling, with about forty men, accompanied us in charge of the general recruits.

The trip to Fortress Munroe was uneventful. I kept my state-room from the time we were well outside Sandy Hook, finding more comfort in the seclusion of my quiet berth than in the boisterous hilarities of stag quadrilles on deck. Concerning precau-

tions taken against guerillas on the James river; the peculiarities of Grant's military railway; the moral, social, and physical aspects of life before Petersburg; some charms of camp guard and picket duty; distant glimpses of the battles of Forts Steadman and Fisher, Virginia, and the assault of Petersburg; Lincoln's triumphal entry into the beleagured fortress; the pursuit of a fleeing army; the battle of Sailor's Creek, and how it seems to get shot; a night in a field hospital, and the bliss of an eight hours' ambulance ride over corduroy roads, when stretched at full length on back or side,— the curious reader may learn if he will by referring to the experiences of "A Recruit before Petersburg," No. 8, Second Series, of these publications. Happy was I when at the close of this ride my ambulance drew up in front of a tent door. Gently was I drawn forth by my feet upon a litter and thence quickly deposited beneath the canvas upon a pine board covered with two army blankets. I have slept upon softer beds, but upon none more welcome. Quiet rest was the heart's desire then —the conditions were immaterial. A supper of hard tack and coffee was speedily

disposed of, a ration of milk punch put out of sight, (they told me it would be good for me,) and forthwith I was in the embrace of Morpheus.

Next morning, Saturday, April 8th, I had a fair chance to inspect my quarters. The tent had evidently seen service. It was blackened from exposure to the elements, and tiny ventilators were abundant. As no heavy rainstorm visited us, this latter peculiarity was not altogether disagreeable. I breakfasted on hard tack and coffee, but dined and supped on hard tack and soup, the principal ingredient of which was apparently corn meal. Yet it was toothsome! In the evening the Sanitary Commission delegate again distributed his ration of punch. This time natural consequences ensued, and I slept very little. Thereupon I was indignant and swore off. I felt that medical officers should be wiser than to permit such an indiscriminate administration of stimulants. My breakfast on the ninth was as that of the preceding day, but the noon-tide soup really contained a bit of beef, with a few pieces of soft bread and some hard tack. It was delicious! Our supper consisted of a pint cupful of rather soft mush, over

which was poured a liberal allowance of warm water, moderately colored, and sweetened with brown sugar. The authorities were very considerate that day. They sent a detail to the woods for pine twigs. These were scattered over the boards with the assurance they would make a nice soft bed. The practical result was this — that whereas previously the only tender parts of my body were the bony protuberances, now every single twig was inflicting a vigorous punch, as it had opportunity. Moral: if you have a nice board to sleep on, be content! This evening the Sanitary chap distributed more punch than usual. A certain tent was occupied by a number of officers, including a colonel. They were making the best of their situation, telling stories, and cracking jokes, *ad infinitum*. Accordingly when he made his rounds they seemed so happy he supposed they had been served. This third evening, however, they decided to keep still until a later hour. They felt they were paying too dearly for their fun.

Monday, April 10th, found our commissariat exhausted, hence no breakfast was provided until nearly ten o'clock, and then in limited quantities;

mush and sorghum—"only that and nothing more!" Later in the forenoon we heard that Lee had surrendered. No special demonstration was elicited. At noon our soup contained a plenty of beef, potato and maccaroni—conclusive evidence that our supply trains had arrived. At night we were regaled with our old familiar tack and coffee.

Around camp were sundry "Johnnies" that had been gobbled up at divers places, and one of these, my attendant, private Lincoln, proceeded to interview. He was about twenty-five years of age, clad in butternut, tall, lank and green. He was with General Lee when he withdrew from Richmond. "How many men did he have with him?" "Oh, I dunno, a right smart heap." "But how many were there? Can't you give me some idea?" "Oh, a big lot of we uns; as many as three thousand!" The calibre of that man's brain was at once manifest, also the advantage of banishing district school-masters.

Tuesday morning we were again served with our familiar hard tack and coffee. At noon another allowance was issued, accompanied with soup, but no beef. About two o'clock I was placed with eight

or ten others in a box car, the floor of which was covered with clean straw some six inches in depth, affording the most comfortable bed I had seen in a month. Stretching myself directly opposite the open door, that I might enjoy the trip as much as possible, I suddenly heard loud cheering rapidly approaching. I glanced up on the low bank, and whom should I discover but General Grant, with Meade, Barnard, and others, with escort, returning from Appomattox. Every wounded man cheered enthusiastically, the General graciously, but gravely, acknowledging their salute. He took the first train to City Point, starting about three. We left on the second, about four. During the delay a Sanitary man came round distributing apples among the disabled. They were the familiar brown russets. Not one was perfectly sound. Most were half or two-thirds gone. The decayed portion had been roughly scraped away with one swoop of the knife, and the sound fragments thrown into the basket. He took half a dozen pieces, and though we stopped not to pare or cleanse more perfectly, no fruit was ever half so luscious. In fact that was the only time I ever

relished an apple. About dark, soft crackers and stimulants were passed through the train; I confined my attention to the former, being wise through — experience.

The early dawn of April 12th found us at Petersburg, and 7 o'clock at City Point. After a long delay I was borne on a litter to the Depot Field Hospital, and placed upon a bed in Ward D, of the Second Stockade of the Second Division of the Sixth Corps Hospital. At first it seemed more nice than wise to assign distinct sections of the hospital to special organizations, but a conversation I overheard on my trip from Burksville demonstrated the foresight of the construction engineer. The colonel, already alluded to, was asked by a captain what he thought of the Ninth Corps. "Oh, they're not of much account! Burnside is the only one that ever could get any fighting out of them." "Well, but they have done some pretty good work under Parke," continued the captain. "Yes," rejoined the colonel, "but that was due to early training. Everybody knows that if it had not been for Burnside the corps never would have amounted to anything." I thought

if any member of that corps had been on the car, there might have been an interesting scene.

The building in which I was placed was a stockade with frame windows and board roof, covered with tarred felting. A broad aisle extended through the centre from end to end, on each side of which were some twenty beds. These were placed upon neat and substantial, though plain frames, the legs of which were stakes driven into the hard beaten clay, that formed a flooring as durable as cement. The ticks were filled with fresh straw, and the pillows with feathers. The sheets were nice and clean. Only those who have not seen one for a month can imagine the luxury of that couch.

As soon as I was settled in bed, breakfast was served—stewed oysters and soft crackers. Then reading matter was distributed. A woman brought around some apples and oranges, but they were no temptation to me.

All days are alike in a hospital. The only way I could keep note of time was by the variations in our bill of fare. Thus Thursday, 13th, was distinguished by the pine-apple served at dinner; the 14th, by

shad for dinner, steak for breakfast, and canned peaches at each of the three meals; and the 15th by striped bass for dinner, and ham and eggs for breakfast. On Sunday, 16th, I was transferred to Ward C. The other was occupied by enlisted men, and there were but one or two officers, who were removed as soon as vacancies occurred in those wards assigned to shoulder-straps. As the nurse came to my bed on his regular bi-daily tour of wound dressing, I observed he poured some liquid from a bottle into the basin of water he was to use in syringing my side. "Hallo! what's that you're putting in?" "Chlorinated soda," was the answer. "What is that for?" "To cleanse the wound; bad stuff is commencing to form there, and if I don't use this now you'll have to have it touched up with lunar caustic by-and-by." "Well, don't it hurt?" "No, nothing of any account." "But it hurt him considerably," said I, bending my head in the direction of the next bed. "Oh, he makes a fuss about nothing." "Well, go ahead!" said I, desperately, as I firmly set my teeth, expecting to be half murdered. The sensation was no more intense than when, two or three days later,

ice water was used for the same purpose. When the dressing had been completed, the nurse asked if it had hurt? "Nothing like what I expected," was the reply.

"Didn't I tell you he was a coward, and makes a great fuss about nothing?" I made very little reply, but thought a bullet wound just in front the instep, necessitating a considerable cut on the under side of the foot for drainage, might be much more painful and sensitive than mine. And yet for the two weeks subsequent a heavy stream of water from a half-pint vulcanized rubber syringe was readily thrown through my side, entering at one bullet hole and emerging at the other. During all this time it was impossible for me to turn from back to side, and the reverse, without assistance; some one was obliged to lift my left foot to the opposite side of the right, and back again.

News was received during the morning of President Lincoln's assassination. About 11 o'clock the ward-master brought in a paper and read some brief particulars. I distinctly remember raising myself upon my elbow and listening attentively to the conclusion

of the account, then falling back exhausted upon my pillow with the reflection, "It's all for the best, else the Supreme would not have permitted it to happen. It's best for him; I have faith to believe it will be best for the country." To-day my opinion is unchanged. His name is unsullied, and though subsequent events are not what we would have desired, the same Hand that guided us to victory will yet lead to unification.

In a neighboring ward an exciting scene occurred. Upon one bed lay a wounded "Johnny." Incautiously he exclaimed, "I am glad of it; he won't free any more niggers!" Instantly every wounded man that could crawl started for the fellow, and would have torn him to pieces had not the ward-master summoned the guard and removed him under escort. That night at supper I had canned tomato and roast apple.

On April 17th, guns were fired half-hourly in memory of the late President. News of Jeff. Davis' Danville proclamation was received, creating much amusement. On the morning of the 18th, I had a severe headache. When I discovered that morphine

entered into the composition of the Dovers' Powders taken on the two preceding evenings, I ascribed it to that, and resolved to have nothing more to do with such stuff. I was suffering from a severe cold consequent upon my partial submersion at Sailor's Creek. It first manifested itself in a harassing cough dependant upon elongation of the uvula, or palate, as it is sometimes improperly denominated. I asked the surgeon for medicine to relieve the condition. He told me there was none, but he would give me a powder to take at night that would relieve me. I pitied the man whose professional resources were so limited, and thought if that was the case the old school might take a few lessons from the new with benefit. (Drs. Ringer, Phillips and Bartholow have since obtained great glory by so doing.) I tried the powders, but speedily fell back upon my pocket case of little sugar pills.

The benumbing influence of wounds demands a moment's attention. The injured man seems entirely absorbed by his physical necessities; he appears almost incapable of higher thoughts or emotions. When for an instant some circumstance of towering

importance or unheard of singularity forces itself upon his attention, realization is but half accomplished—it is as though it were not—and immediately the recollection thereof is well nigh obliterated. The practical bearing of this fact upon the question of preparation for the great hereafter is obvious.

One morning, perhaps it was that on which the news of Johnston's surrender was received, I remarked, "Well, my fighting days are over for one while I guess!" Captain Walter B. Smith, of the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts, who lay on the bed opposite, spoke up, "you mustn't feel so, Peck. There are a plenty of men who have been wounded a great deal worse than you, that are all right now." "Pooh!" was the rejoinder, "I am not in the least discouraged, only before any of us will be able to move around much the war will be over." "That's so," said he, "but I have no cause for complaint. A man must expect to be hit once in a while. I have fired over two hundred shots at the 'Johnnies,' and I *know* I reached my mark more than three-quarters of the time. This is the fourth time I have been wounded, and I don't know as that is more than my

share under the circumstances." "You have the advantage of me," I replied. "I came out on general principles; for the sake of my country; now I have a private account. And I haven't hurt a flea to my knowledge since I have been out here!" "That does make a difference," he rejoined, "but you may consider your injury as part payment for what I have inflicted. However, you've shown your good will, and that is all any of us have done."

The bed next mine was occupied by Adjutant John S. Bradley, also of the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts, a graduate of Union College, and a very agreeable fellow. He was twice wounded at Sailor's Creek, once by a small pistol shot, that struck on or near his shoulder-blade, and presumably glanced out, for it could not be found, neither was there indication of its burrowing. A rifle ball, also, passed through both thighs, leaving, of course, four marks upon his person. His overcoat was burned both on the back and side. Exactly how and when the former was inflicted, I never knew, but the latter was received under the following circumstances. Affairs had become decidedly mixed. Hand to hand encounters

were frequent. A confederate who had pushed boldly forward to repel the Yankee attack naturally determined to quiet the prominent leader near him and delivered his fire with the effect just indicated. A private soldier caught him in the act and presented him with one of the charges in the chamber of his seven-shooter, thereby immediately terminating his sublunary existence. The Yankee now travelled on in search of farther adventure, and speedily found it, for another "Johnny" chanced to walk in the same direction.

Mr. Massachusetts took no particular notice of the fellow's presence (for he wore a blue overcoat) until suddenly he felt a bayonet run through his breast, and saw Mr. Southron dropping the rifle with which the wound had been inflicted, seize his own Spencer and endeavor to wrest it from his grasp. But alas! for the "Johnny!" He had miscalculated the chances of war. Southern impetuosity was no match for northern pertinacity. The bayonet was drawn out of the wound partly by the weight of the pendant rifle, and partly by the twistings of the combatants. Once freed the Yank gave an almost super-human wrench,

breaking away his erring brother's ruthless grasp of his pet, (for the Thirty-seventh boys loved their repeaters better than their sweethearts), and the next instant brought the butt down fairly and squarely on the cranium of the poor unfortunate who sank to rise no more. I saw the Massachusetts man some two weeks after in the hospital at City Point. He had called in to see his Adjutant,—sufficient evidence his wound was doing well.

On Saturday morning, April 22d, leaves of absence came for all wounded officers who desired to spend the period of their convalescence at home. Most took the boat next morning, (perhaps that they might reach New York in time to witness Lincoln's funeral cortege), but I remained until Monday morning. I was recompensed for my good conduct by having an entire state-room to myself on my passage to Washington, though very many sound officers, who had secured brief leaves now that the war was virtually ended, were obliged to spend the night on the floor. We settled our board bills before leaving, some of us by paying cash, others by orders on the paymaster. The price was one dollar per

day, an extremely moderate rate when time, place, circumstance and quality of fare are considered. The only criticism that ever entered my mind was concerning the propriety of granting wounded men such a liberal meat diet. I found I could not bear it, and accordingly devoted most of my attention to vegetables and other farinaceous articles of food, especially puddings, which were most excellent. I apprehend many a fever was enkindled by incautious feasting under such conditions.

A summer or two after the war I chanced to meet one afternoon at Rocky Point James McWhinnie, Jr., then a student in Brown University, but more recently a clergyman of considerable note. At the battle of Chancellorsville, while in the discharge of his duty as sergeant of the Twentieth Connecticut Volunteers, he received a severe wound, necessitating the removal of his left leg near the knee. After mutual introduction and a few commonplace remarks, he suddenly asked, "Were you ever sorry that you entered the service?" "Never!" was my prompt reply. "Nor I either," was the quick rejoinder; continuing, "I have always entertained supreme contempt for those